ASSESSING THE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF WELFARE-TO-WORK PARTICIPANTS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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November 2, 2000

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The assessment research described in this report was prepared for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services.

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Acknowledgments

The authors thank many people who helped make this report possible, including: Brian Taylor, Michela Zonta, Shannon McConville, Douglas Miller, Hiro Iseki, Todd Snyder, Donny Ha, Julia Heintz-Mackoff, Katsumi Nonaka and Gian-Claudia Sciara at the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies at UCLA; Gregory Robinson, Shelley Osborne, Ronald Hughes and all the survey interviewers at the Social Science Research Center, California State University at Fullerton; Jim Sims, Sina Zarifi, Deng Bang Lee, Hong Kim, Cheryl Collier and Rina Pangindian at the Southern California Association of Governments; Julie Peggar and Janet Andreas, our focus group transcribers; Margarita Gonzalez-Kojima, our Spanish speaking focus group facilitator and transcriber; Jennifer McLaughlin, Steve Hossack and Robert Michaels at GIS/Trans; Lynn Bayer, Steven Golightly, Phil Ansell, Vance Martin, Rueben Basconcillo, Roger Lorenzo, Jose Salgado, Lola Nevarez and GAIN staff at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services; Jim McLaughlin, Desiree Portillo-Rabinov, Matt Goldman, Anibal Galindez and Ashok Kumar at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority; Mary Williams and Job Club staff at the Los Angeles County Office of Education; Chuck Purvis at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission; Michael Lichter, Wayne Bannister and Mary Mar at the Urban Research Division; Jeff Henderson, Tom Rice and Elizabeth Gonzalez, formerly of Urban Research; Feliciano Alvarado, Bill Bicker, Ann Francis, Scott Green, Samuel James, Helen Jones, Karen Klabin, Naomi Lomsky, John McCall, Kate Meiss, Ed Mukai, Irene Portillo, Maria Reader and John Snyder of the Technical Advisory Committee; and the numerous members of the Welfare-to-Work Transportation Inter-Agency Task Force. We also express special gratitude to our survey and focus group respondents.

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Executive Summary

On August 11, 1997, the State of California established the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, representing California's implementation of the welfare reforms prescribed by Congress in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. The CalWORKs program is designed to help families transition from public assistance to employment, with a final goal of self-sufficiency. The program focuses primarily on helping participants find and retain employment as well as providing assistance to mitigate potential barriers to employment for its participants.

In order for welfare participants to join the work force, they need access to reliable, efficient and safe transportation not only to job sites, but also to childcare, health care centers and other services. Recognizing that one of the most critical barriers to finding and maintaining employment is access to adequate transportation resources, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the County's Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan on June 15, 1999. The plan specified that a comprehensive needs assessment was to be performed by the Chief Administrative Office, Urban Research Division (URD) determining the nature and depth of the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population in Los Angeles County.

The CalWORKs Transportation Needs Assessment (CTNA) is a collaborative project that has benefited from the contribution of a number of agencies and research partners. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the needs assessment, composed of members of the Transportation Interagency Task Force (TIATF), which was established to facilitate input from community groups and interested parties, reviewed the design, goals, polices and conduct of the study including the survey instrument used to gather information on the transportation needs of participants. Technical and analytical support was provided by UCLA's Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, GIS/TRANS, Ltd., the Social Science Research Center at California State University, Fullerton, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Dr. John Horton of UCLA and Dr. Linda Shaw of the California State University, San Marcos. Preliminary findings were presented to the Transportation and Human Services Executive Council, which also provided valuable input for the completion of the needs assessment.

The goal of the transportation needs assessment is to begin to fill in gaps in our understanding of the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population in Los Angeles as they strive for economic self-sufficiency. By matching the available transportation resources to participants' needs, we identify those needs which are unmet by current services. In this way we hope to provide policy makers with more precise information as to what types of programs should be implemented as well as where and when they are likely to be more successful. This report represents the findings of the CalWORKs Transportation Needs Assessment and provides the Board of Supervisors and county transportation planners with baseline information on the transportation behavior and needs of welfare-to-work participants in Los Angeles County, as well as a description of the transportation barriers that hinder the transition from welfare to work.

Data for the needs assessment came from numerous sources. Information on travel behavior and needs of welfare-to-work participants was drawn from a survey of 1,645 GAIN participants (GAIN, or Greater Avenues for Independence, is a Los Angeles County program that is responsible for providing welfare participants with employment related services). In addition to deriving information from survey methods, information was gathered from eight focus group sessions conducted in GAIN offices between November 1999 and February 2000. The needs assessment also relied upon numerous sources provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) for information on public transportation in Los Angeles County. Included in this data is an inventory of public transit systems in the county and detailed information on transit usage levels. Much of this data was mapped to identify geographic patterns.

In addition to CTNA data, this report utilizes findings and tabulations from other surveys of employers and the non-welfare population, as well as county and state administrative data. The CTNA analysis also relied on state of the art transportation research tools including transportation modeling, geographic information systems (GIS), and multivariate methods of analysis.

The main findings of the study are presented below:

Travel by Welfare-to-Work Participants

- The travel patterns of the CTNA population differ markedly from the travel patterns of working-age adults in general, but are similar to those of low-income single parents nationwide.
- Job search and work activities require participants to increase their travel; for instance, recipients searching for a job make twice as many trips a day as those not working and not actively searching for work.
- Welfare participants are more likely to use public transit than the general population.
- Among the CTNA population who own a car, the majority of trips (83 percent) were in a car. But even among respondents who do not own a car, about a third (35 percent) of trips were in private vehicles.

Transportation Needs and the Transition from Welfare to Work

- Approximately one half of the welfare-to-work population is employed; among those who are not working, about half are actively seeking work.
- From a transportation point of view, the job-search phase appears to be the most difficult stage in the transition from welfare to work.
- Job search is characterized by a high degree of complexity and uncertainty in transportation as participants make an increased number of daily trips to many destinations, travel to unfamiliar areas and make new arrangements for family obligations.
- Relative to those traveling by car, participants who use public transit are twice as likely to state that their job-search travel or work commute is difficult.

- The rate of car ownership and usage increases as welfare-to-work participants transition into employment.
- Transit usage (for job search or work commute) increases among those without cars in their households and among those residing in neighborhoods with good transit service.
- Unrestricted access to a household car is highly correlated with employment.
- Among those with limited access or no access to household cars, the employment rate increases with higher levels of transit service.
- Many employed participants work occasionally during weekends and/or outside of the standard workday; this creates transportation problems, especially for those relying on public transit.
- Among employed participants, the average travel distance (approximately 7 miles) is shorter than the average for other workers.

Childcare and Health Care Travel

- The presence of younger children (ages 0-4) decreases the odds of currently being employed and increases the odds of perceiving transportation as a major problem in finding and keeping a job.
- Welfare-to-work requirements increase participants' need for and use of childcare. About a third (35 percent) of those not working and not actively searching use some form of childcare, while two-fifths (42 percent) of job seekers and 84 percent of employed respondents use childcare.
- The most common type of childcare involves relatives, friends and neighbors caring for the children; employed participants tend to use more formal, paid childcare arrangements.
- The relative supply of nearby licensed care slots increases the likelihood that a child receives licensed care over other types of care, although the relative supply of nearby licensed care slots does not seem to impact the overall level of childcare usage.
- Job searchers and welfare-to-work participants who rely on public transit report the greatest difficulties with childcare trips.
- Trips for job search and work often impact the amount of time school-age children are left unsupervised and whether they can participate in after school activities.
- Almost three-quarters of participants made a health-related trip in the previous six months; one-half of respondents perceive transportation as a problem to receiving health care.
- Nearly one-third of participants report that a lack of transportation has prevented them or a member of their family from receiving health care in the past.

Transportation Problems and Policy Preferences

- On a typical day, over half (63 percent) of all participants' trips were by car, either as a passenger or a driver, 18 percent were on public transit, and 16 percent were walking.
- Many welfare participants without access to a car ride with friends or relatives rather than rely on public transit. For every ten trips on a bus or train, there are nine trips as a passenger in a private vehicle.

- Participants who travel by car are significantly less likely to report trip difficulty compared to those using other modes of travel; this finding holds for job-search, work commute, childcare and health care trips.
- Despite the usefulness of an automobile in meeting welfare to work and family obligations, recipients with a household car report problems related to reliability and cost.
- Participants have a strong preference for programs that facilitate ownership of a reliable vehicle, such as auto loans and help with insurance costs.
- About two-fifths of participants who used public transit found it a viable mode of transportation, that is, they reported that it was relatively easy to get to and from their activities using public transportation.
- The higher the level of public transit service near a participant's home, the more likely a participant is to use public transportation. However, public transit is not often the preferred choice of travel since it increases the difficulty of planning and completing complex work and household-related trips.
- Travel by public transit can be difficult for participants because of the difficulty identifying appropriate routes, the lack of direct lines (requiring transfers), crowding, buses passing by at stops, limited off-hour runs, and the inconvenience of transit for making multiple work and family-related trips.
- When asked about ways to improve public transportation, most participants prefer more frequent and reliable transit service regardless of whether they live in areas with high or low levels of transit service.
- The availability and reliability of public transit varies greatly from one neighborhood to another; roughly a third of participants live in areas with low levels of transit service.
- GAIN participants need backup transportation services for emergencies regardless of whether they have access to reliable transit or a private vehicle.

Matching Existing Transportation Services to Participants' Needs

- The GAIN population is highly concentrated in the central portions of the County.
- The neighborhoods where welfare participants live generally do not have a significant number of jobs for which GAIN participants are qualified.
- The home to work distance for most GAIN participants is about seven miles, which is considerably less than that for many other major metropolitan areas.
- While travel by car is the preferred method among the welfare-to-work population, car ownership is beyond the resources of many GAIN participants, and public resources may be insufficient to bridge that gap.
- Transit accessibility varies widely throughout Los Angeles County, but in general, transit accessibility is higher in areas that correspond to the residential and potential job locations of the welfare-to-work population.
- Transit accessibility varies considerably by time of day and is considerably lower during "off peak" hours; this means that GAIN participants who work during those "off-peak" hours are likely to find only limited transit service.
- Job accessibility, a crucial factor in transitioning to employment, varies widely throughout Los Angeles County, and by mode of transportation.

- Participants who travel by car have much wider job accessibility than those who must rely on public transit.
- There are wide areas of the County that have both low levels of transit accessibility and low levels of job accessibility. Participants who live in these areas, which account for roughly 36 percent of the current GAIN population, are significantly disadvantaged in their ability to transition to full employment.
- Individuals who live in areas with low levels of transit accessibility need to rely on modes other than transit. In order to address their needs, the County will require the development of more creative public programs, which could be built around the encouragement of formal and informal carpooling, and the mobilization of other flexible forms of transportation.

Conclusion

The travel behaviors of the GAIN population are complex, and driven by a variety of factors: where they live, their employment status, what stage of the welfare-to-work process they find themselves in, and their available resources. This study has identified a series of transportation deficiencies that are centered around neighborhood characteristics, method of travel selected, types of family-related trips which are required, and transportation needs which are generated by the requirements of the system and process itself.

We have tried to group the unmet needs into major categories that facilitate a comprehensive view of the main transportation barriers faced by welfare participants. Although in reality it is not possible to separate one deficiency from another because they are interrelated and overlapping, for the purposes of this analysis we have identified four major types of deficiencies:

1. Spatial or neighborhood deficiencies
2. Mode of transportation deficiencies
3. Family-related trip deficiencies
4. Welfare-to-work stage deficiencies

Spatial or neighborhood deficiencies are those which limit participants' chances of securing employment based upon the accessibility characteristics of their neighborhoods. With this research we have been able to identify that a significant number of GAIN participants are disadvantaged by where they live relative to existing transportation services and the location of potential jobs. Since extending transit services may not be economically feasible in these areas, more creative programs may need to be devised to address these spatial deficiencies. For example, non-fixed route transportation, carpools and vanpools may help in these areas. Coordination with neighboring counties is also important when identifying areas with potential entry-level jobs and transit services.

Modal deficiencies occur when the supply of different modes of transportation is exceeded by demand. Three distinct groups among the GAIN population were used to identify modes of transportation throughout this report: those who use cars, those who attempt to secure auto passenger trips, and those who take existing public transit.

As is expected in a city like Los Angeles, there is an overwhelming preference for travel by car among GAIN participants. Those who travel by private vehicle, either as a driver or passenger, report having a considerably easier time in all stages of the welfare-to-work process and with other supportive trips. Car ownership is positively correlated with employment status, those with cars are much more likely to be employed.

Collected data and analysis also shows there was considerable use of auto passenger trips among participants without consistent access to an automobile. Auto passengers generally resided in areas of low transit service, and in this respect, riding as passengers in private vehicles serves as a surrogate for public transit. Many participants rely on an informal system that offers rides for a fee, a practice that should be acknowledged in the design of transportation programs to serve the welfare population.

Transit usage is much higher among this population than it is among the average working age adult population, and relative to those who travel by car, transit users were twice as likely to say their commutes were difficult, and that transportation problems made it hard to find or keep a job. The most commonly reported problems reported by the group of welfare participants who rely on public transit include: overcrowding, buses that do not stop, unfamiliarity with the transit routes, stress of traveling with children, and how time consuming trips are. For the majority of transit riders, more frequent bus service is the preferred choice for improvement and cost was a lower consideration than other improvements, such as frequency of service, being on time, and closer bus stops.

Family-related trip deficiencies reflect welfare-to-work participants' difficulties balancing work-related travel with family obligations. For welfare-to-work participants, a typical day is not only work-centered, but family-centered as well. Transportation is not only used to get to and from work, but to address other family issues such as childcare, health care, shopping, and errands. Entry into the labor force increases the need for and use of childcare. The most common form of childcare used by participants involved friends and family taking care of the children. Using this type of care represented short travel distances to childcare. Access to health care can also be a problem without adequate transportation, especially in emergencies.

The welfare-to-work stage deficiencies describe those transportation difficulties and barriers that participants face in relation to their current stage in the process of moving from welfare to work, as discussed in Section 3. For purposes of our analysis, we identified three main stages in the welfare-to-work transition, based on employment status: (1) not working or seeking work, (2) job search, and (3) employment. At the time of the survey, half of GAIN participants reported that they were employed and a quarter that they were actively looking for a job; the remaining quarter were not working or seeking work.

Welfare-to-work participants face the greatest number of transportation difficulties while seeking work. Requirements of the welfare-to-work program generate new transportation needs for participants that are not met by the services provided. Job search is likely to be difficult, not only because of the greater transportation needs, but because of a whole complex of demands made upon participants. Transportation assistance will likely have the greatest impact at this stage of the process. Since the welfare-to-work program imposes programmatic requirements as

well as additional travel, and participants must cope with a lack of transportation, a dual approach may be advisable. The GAIN program can adopt a more 'transportation-conscious' plan and perform a re-evaluation of programmatic elements, while transportation authorities design programs that supply transportation where it is currently unavailable.

Research described within this report has identified a number of problems and concerns expressed by welfare participants struggling to find or keep jobs. These problems and concerns suggest that a series of questions should be asked about any proposed mode of transportation. These questions are: When is it available? How consistent is it? How long does it take to reach a specific destination? Is information available for the planning of trips? How complicated is it to negotiate actual travel? Is it safe? Is it child-friendly? How much physical effort does it take? How much does it cost?

The above policy suggestions, in coordination with the data compiled by the needs assessment and the analysis provided by this report, will assist in the design of policies that address the identified transportation deficiencies. This next step should also involve a critical analysis of transportation programs for welfare participants already implemented around the country, which may help identify solutions that can be followed and implemented in Los Angeles County. An overview of programs implemented in different areas of the U.S. (see Appendix 11) has been included with this report. Although very little has been done to evaluate how effective/extensive the programs are, drawing upon past experience may help with the current development of new programs.

Section 1. Introduction

On August 11, 1997, the State of California established the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, representing California's implementation of the welfare reforms prescribed by Congress in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996. The CalWORKs program is designed to help families transition from public assistance to employment, with a final goal of self-sufficiency. The program focuses primarily on helping participants find and retain employment as well as providing assistance to mitigate potential barriers to employment for its participants.

In order for welfare participants to join the work force, they need access to reliable, efficient and safe transportation not only to job sites, but also to childcare, health care centers and other services. Recognizing that one of the most critical barriers to finding and maintaining employment is access to adequate transportation resources, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the County's Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan on June 15, 1999. The plan specified that a comprehensive needs assessment was to be performed by the Chief Administrative Office, Urban Research Division (URD) determining the nature and depth of the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population in Los Angeles County.

The CalWORKs Transportation Needs Assessment (CTNA) is a collaborative project that has benefited from the contribution of a number of agencies and research partners. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) composed of members of the Transportation Interagency Task Force (TIATF)-, was formed to facilitate input from community groups and interested parties. The TAC reviewed the design, goals, polices and conduct of the study including the survey instrument used to gather information on the transportation needs of participants. Technical and analytical support was provided by UCLA's Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, GIS/TRANS, Ltd., the Social Science Research Center at California State University, Fullerton, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Dr. John Horton of UCLA and Dr. Linda Shaw of the California State University, San Marcos. Preliminary findings were presented to the Transportation and Human Services Executive Council, which also provided valuable input for the completion of the needs assessment.

Despite a growing body of research on the transportation challenges and burdens faced by welfare participants, many aspects of the travel behavior and needs of welfare households' nation-wide remain unknown:

> "There is little information about whether transportation is a small problem for many welfare recipients, a large problem for many, or a large problem for a small portion of the population. Some work-welfare evaluations that have asked recipients about barriers to employment suggest that transportation may be a very serious barrier to employment for small portions of the welfare population. […] Transportation may be only one of several problems impeding stable employment."[1]

The goal of the transportation needs assessment is to begin to fill in gaps in our understanding of the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population in Los Angeles as they strive for

economic self-sufficiency. By matching the available transportation resources to participants' needs, we identify those needs which are unmet by current services, hence providing policy makers with more precise information as to what types of programs should be implemented as well as where and when they are likely to be more successful. This report represents the findings of the CalWORKs Transportation Needs Assessment and provides the Board of Supervisors and county transportation planners with baseline information on the transportation behavior and needs of welfare-to-work participants in Los Angeles County. A primary emphasis is on the transportation barriers that hinder the transition from welfare to work.

The focus of this needs assessment is on the following three questions:

- How do welfare participants travel to their specific destinations?
- What are the unmet transportation needs of welfare participants?
- To what extent can existing transportation programs and services be made to adequately meet the unmet transportation needs of welfare participants?

Data for the needs assessment came from numerous sources. Information on travel behavior and needs of welfare-to-work participants was drawn from a survey of 1,645 GAIN participants (GAIN, or Greater Avenues for Independence, is a Los Angeles County program that is responsible for providing welfare participants with employment related services).[2] In addition to deriving information from survey methods, information was gathered from eight focus group sessions conducted in GAIN offices between November 1999 and February 2000. While survey analysis provides a quantitative and representative portrait of transportation needs, the focus groups provide an in-depth understanding of people's lived experiences. The qualitative data collected from the focus groups also provides insight into the processes and patterns that may not be apparent in survey results.

The needs assessment also relied upon numerous sources provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) for information on public transportation in Los Angeles County. Included in this data is an inventory of public transit systems in the county and detailed information on transit usage levels. Much of this data was mapped to identify geographic patterns.

In addition to CTNA data, this report utilizes findings and tabulations from other surveys of employers and the non-welfare population, as well as county and state administrative data. The CTNA analysis also relied on state of the art transportation research tools including transportation modeling, geographic information systems (GIS), and multivariate methods of analysis. Detailed descriptions of the data and methods are provided in the appendices.

The report is organized into six sections, followed by extensive technical appendices, which are contained in a separate document. Section 2 reviews background information on the welfare-to-work program in Los Angeles County, as well as existing research on the travel behavior of welfare participants and the role of transportation as participants move to employment. Section 3 describes transportation needs of welfare participants in Los Angeles County as they search for work, secure employment and commute regularly to jobs. Section 4 describes transportation challenges participants face in balancing work and family obligations, focusing on needs related

to childcare and health care trips. Section 5 describes transportation problems reported by participants and their preferences for transportation programs. Section 6 discusses the extent that existing transportation programs and services meet the transportation needs of welfare participants. Section 7 provides an overview of key transportation barriers faced by welfare participants, summarizing the transportation deficiencies into four major areas.

The main findings of this research are summarized in a separate Executive Report.

Section 2. Travel by Welfare to Work Participants

This section offers background information on the welfare-to-work program in Los Angeles County, focusing on activities and requirements that impact the travel behavior and transportation needs of participants. Previous research on the travel behavior of welfare participants and the role of transportation in moving participants to work is also presented in this section. In addition, travel patterns of GAIN participants in Los Angeles County are described and compared with two national reference groups. The section identifies key issues addressed in the needs assessment and places the results of this report in a broad context.

The key points identified in this section are:

- The travel patterns of the CTNA population differ markedly from the travel patterns of working-age adults in general, but are similar to those of low-income single parents nationwide.
- Job search and work activities require participants to increase their travel; for instance, recipients searching for a job make twice as many trips a day as those not working and not actively searching for work.
- Welfare participants are more likely to use public transit than the general population.
- Among the CTNA population who own a car, the majority of trips (83 percent) were in a car. But even among respondents who do not own a car, about a third (35 percent) of trips were in private vehicles.

Welfare-to-Work Requirements Impact Transportation Needs

The federal welfare reform adopted in 1996 fundamentally changed welfare, eliminating the historic cash assistance and long-term maintenance aid, and substituting it with a support system that requires participants to work. The new system is based on the assumption that most welfare parents are able to become stable wage earners, becoming wage-reliant instead of welfare-reliant. In Los Angeles, the GAIN program, Greater Avenues for Independence, was developed to provide welfare participants with employment related services, helping CalWORKs recipients find and retain employment, as well as move to better jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency.[3]

Most CalWORKs participants are required to enroll in GAIN, unless they are exempt due to disability, age, or other situations that hinder their ability to work.[4] Once enrolled, certain requirements must be met which affect travel patterns and needs of participants. The main program requirements and activities, which impact transportation demands, will be discussed below.

The first activity participants are required to attend after registration in GAIN is an orientation and appraisal activity. This one-day activity is usually held at one of the GAIN regional offices. After orientation and appraisal, most participants enter the job search phase.[5] During the job search phase, participants are enrolled in Job Club, a three-week activity designed to help

participants find full or part time employment.[6] Participants are required to treat Job Club as if it were an actual job: dress appropriately, report on time, and participate actively in the workshops.

During the first week of Job Club, recipients participate in a job-finding skills workshop, which is followed by two weeks of supervised job search. During this two-week period, participants make calls to prospective employers using phone banks and travel to job interviews. The L.A. GAIN Program Handbook, as well as the DPSS website, indicate that the goal is 50 calls and five interviews per day.[7] However, recent information provided by LACOE, the contractor that provides these services for DPSS, indicates that as of July 2000, the daily requirements for participants are to find 5 employers who are hiring, and participate in at least 3 job applications or interviews per day.[8]

For a participant, this not only means traveling to and from the location of Job Club, but additionally traveling to several possible job locations. Although some participants might go to a single place such as a shopping mall in order to complete the required applications, others might have to travel considerable distances to reach different possible job locations. Even for participants with access to private vehicles, traveling to many different locations is stressful and difficult to achieve. It seems quite unlikely that participants can reach the Job Club goal utilizing public transportation. It is during this two-week period of job seeking when recipients probably face the greatest transportation difficulties, as their activities deviate from their daily routines, and as they travel to unfamiliar locations, making many trips per day.

If a participant is successful in finding employment, travel patterns will shift according to the requirements of the new job. Travel will probably become more routine, and the participant will adjust to a regular commute. However, even with employment, he or she may want to continue receiving post employment services designed to help participants stay employed and attain better jobs. These services include a wide range of activities, most of which are voluntary. In addition to any post employment services a participant chooses to take advantage of, an intensive job retention case management activity is mandatory for the first three months of full-time employment. During these three months, contact is done mainly over the phone or by mail unless the participant requests to go to the GAIN office. This activity structure benefits the participant by not imposing extra travel efforts.

If participants do not find employment after the third week of Job Club, they must go through another period of supervised job search or are referred to vocational assessment. Vocational assessment is a one or two-day activity conducted by contracted providers at various locations throughout the county, usually located near the participant's residence. During these sessions, participants meet with vocational assessors to develop an employment plan that may include training, work experience, additional job searching, and possible referral to supportive services.

Administrative data for March of 2000 shows that of the 2,880 participants referred to Job Club during the month of March, 46 percent actually showed up and of those who enrolled, 34 percent were placed in jobs by the end of the three-week period. Estimates show that between 9 and 12 percent of those not placed return for a second period of supervised job search.[9]

To add to the complexity of participants travel needs, those enrolled in GAIN who need supportive services, such as mental health, substance abuse or domestic violence help, are referred to treatment or other support centers. As a result participants may have to engage in additional travel to such supportive service centers.[10]

In some cases, participants can meet the requirement to participate full time in welfare-to-work activities by concurrently participating in more than one activity. For example, they may participate in vocational training and job search services, each one part-time. This means that they must combine travel patterns to various locations each day.

In order to help participants with welfare-to-work activities, GAIN offers transportation assistance to cover some of the costs of travel for welfare-to-work activities. This assistance may be in the form of bus passes, cash for fares, and mileage reimbursement. However, our survey data reveals that only about one-tenth of participants report receiving this supportive service from DPSS, which is consistent with analysis of administrative data provided by DPSS (see Appendix 7).

Even with assistance for transportation costs, participants have to find a means to get to and from DPSS offices, Job Clubs, job interviews, and work locations while simultaneously meeting other family obligations. Throughout the remainder of this section we examine previous research of the travel patterns of welfare-to-work participants, as well as the available transportation resources.

Previous Research on Transportation and Welfare

Previous research identifies the lack of adequate transportation as a major barrier in making the transition from welfare to work. Adequate transportation is one of many new challenges imposed by the "job first" strategy of welfare-to-work policies. Many recipients with little or no work experience must search for and secure employment; even those who have worked occasionally must dramatically increase their level of employment. Recent research begins to address the dimensions of the welfare-to-work transition and the role of transportation in this process:

> "Transportation and welfare studies show that without adequate transportation, welfare recipients face significant barriers in trying to move from welfare to work. These challenges are particularly acute for urban mothers receiving welfare who do not own cars and must make multiple trips each day to accommodate childcare and other domestic responsibilities and for the rural poor who generally drive long distances in poorly maintained cars. Existing public transportation systems cannot always bridge the gap between where the poor live and where the jobs are located."[11]

Recent research on transportation and welfare also provides insight into several key issues that impact participants' ability to travel. These key issues (summarized by study, population, and results) are presented in Table 1 and will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Table 1. Major Research on Transportation and Welfare

	Study	Population	Results
Spatial Mismatch	Blumenberg, et al. (1999)[12]	LA TANF	Spatial Mismatch present for many
	Bania, et al. (1999)[13]	Cleveland TANF	Spatial Mismatch present for most
	Rich (1999)[14]	Atlanta TANF - multi sites	Spatial Mismatch present for most
	Pugh (1998)[15]	AFDC/TANF - multi sites	LA has more dispersed poor and welfare populations, lower level of spatial mismatch
Job Accessibility	Blumenberg & Ong (1999)[16]	LA AFDC	Welfare usage is lower in job rich areas
	Hoynes (1996)[17]	CA AFDC	Welfare usage is lower in tight labor markets
Role of Car	Ong (1996)[18]	CA AFDC	Car ownership greatly increases employment and earnings
	Cervero et al. (1999)[19]	CA AFDC	Car ownership greatly increases employment & exit from welfare
	Raphael & Rice (1999)[20]	US AFDC/TANF	Car ownership greatly decreases welfare use
	Danziger et al. (1999)[21]	Michigan TANF	Car enables recipient to search more widely
Role of Transit	Cervero, et al. (1999)[22]	CA AFDC	Access to public transit has no measurable input on employment or exit from welfare
	O'Regan & Quigley (2000)[23]	US AFDC	Recipients are more reliant on public transportation even after controlling for a car
	Bania et al. (1999)[24]	Cleveland TANF	Only 20% of entry level positions accessible to recipients using transit
Work Schedule	Presser & Cox (1997)[25]	US Less-Educated Women	Welfare recipients are most likely to work non-standard hours and days
	O'Regan & Quigley (2000)[26]	US AFDC	Recipients are 1.5 times as likely to commute at off peak hours as the poor
Burden of Travel	Ong & Blumenberg (1999)[27]	LA AFDC	Longer commute decreases earnings and job stability
	Passero (1996)[28]	US AFDC	Working recipients spend four times as much on transportation than non-working recipients

Spatial Mismatch & Job Accessibility

Transportation difficulties arise for welfare-to-work participants because job opportunities are often located far from their homes. This type of geographic separation is referred to as "spatial mismatch" by recent research and is a major barrier for many low-income workers, especially those without access to an automobile.[29] This group often cannot move closer to jobs and remain isolated from expanding suburban employment opportunities.

Even when low-income families live near jobs they often experience "skills mismatch". This occurs when low-income workers live near jobs that are higher skill and higher paying for which they are unqualified. Even when no spatial mismatch or skills mismatch exist, search for employment can be hindered by reluctance on the part of firms to recruit and hire workers from low income, minority neighborhoods.[30]

As one might expect, welfare participants can be particularly affected by spatial and skills mismatches. A growing body of research shows that the degree of isolation experienced by recipients varies from one metropolitan area to another. Cleveland and Atlanta, for example, are typical of eastern cities with extreme racial segregation between African-Americans and Anglos. In such cities, the spatial mismatch between economically depressed, largely black neighborhoods and economically vibrant white suburbs is often clear and dramatic.[31] In contrast, Metropolitan Los Angeles is both more ethnically diverse and spatially diffuse than either Cleveland or Atlanta. Despite Los Angeles's diffuse structure, some households on welfare clearly face a spatial mismatch, affecting their ability to find and keep employment.[32] In Los Angeles, both the causes and consequences of mismatches are more subtle and complex than in many other cities.[33] For example, the levels of employment access vary considerably between low-income neighborhoods in Los Angeles. However, recent studies have shown that greater neighborhood accessibility to jobs is correlated with lower rates of welfare usage.[34]

Existing research also suggests that the problems presented by spatial and skills mismatches can be addressed in three ways: workers can relocate nearer to jobs, jobs can be relocated closer to workers, or the transportation system connecting workers with jobs can be improved to reduce the "friction of distance" between poor households and job opportunities. The literature indicates that moving poor households into suburbs has a positive effect, but this approach has not been widely used, due in part to resistance by suburban communities. Creating jobs near workers through economic development efforts in poor areas, such as enterprise zones, has had mixed results, with a very high cost for creating new jobs of which few go to local residents.

It is also the case that a disproportionate number of disadvantaged people rely on the existing public transit system to get them to jobs. Research suggests that the public transit system often imposes a burden in terms of slower commutes; hence spatial mismatch can be considered a transportation mismatch for disadvantaged groups given their lower access to private vehicles.[35]

Role Of Transportation Resources

The availability and reliability of both private vehicles and public transit often determines the quality and quantity of jobs that are accessible by welfare participants and the working poor. A number of recent studies have shown that providing regular access to a reliable vehicle is one of the most effective means of increasing steady employment among recipients. In Michigan, research shows that car access substantially increases the area within which the recipient can search for a job.[36] Additionally, a study of California AFDC data finds that car ownership greatly increases both the earnings and likelihood of employment.[37] This is supported by a second study using similar data, which shows that automobile ownership increases the likelihood of finding employment and exiting welfare.[38] When a recipient can increase their job search area, they reduce the spatial mismatch by accessing previously unreachable neighborhoods

where the majority of new, low-skill jobs are. Overall, recent research shows that car ownership decreases welfare use.[39]

In contrast to private vehicles, the role of public transportation in increasing employment for low-income households is more complex. The availability and, especially, use of public transportation varies widely, usually tending to be greatest in the centers of the largest metropolitan areas. Transit availability is limited in suburban areas and is frequently absent in small towns and rural areas. As discussed, many low-income families in U.S. cities are located in the inner city, while the jobs they can potentially secure are located in the suburbs. Thus, while many participants have access to nearby public transportation stops, the available service offers only limited access to job opportunities. This however is not an accurate conclusion in the case for Los Angeles County, as shown by a recent study using AFDC data in California, which found that access to public transit had no measurable impact on employment outcomes or leaving welfare.[40]

Because of the high costs of auto ownership, households on welfare are nevertheless far more likely to use public transit than the general population.[41] Public transit, therefore, plays an important, though spatially varied, role in the life and employment of welfare participants.

Job Characteristics

Research on the employment of welfare participants indicates that they are more likely to be employed non-standard hours and days than the general population of workers.[42] Over half (57 percent) of the employed recipients worked at least occasional weekends, while a third (34 percent) reported working very often on weekends and another third (34 percent) responded they did not have a fixed workday. Among those with regular schedules, two-fifths (40 percent) did not start work during the traditional morning hours of 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM. In addition, most jobs average a distance of seven miles, but a fifth of working participants were at least 11 miles away.[43] These combined factors can create a significant commuting burden, particularly if transportation is poor.

For those dependent on public transportation, this represents a problem since transit schedules are not typically structured around these non-traditional work hours. Such scheduling constraints appear to be especially problematic for welfare participants, since they are 50 percent more likely to commute outside of the peak hours than low-income workers in general,[44] and are predominantly females who may feel unsafe riding public transit during those off-peak times.

Work commutes can be time-consuming and expensive for welfare recipients relative to their limited earnings. On average, working welfare participants have shorter commutes than higher-paid workers; however the time and money costs of commuting to those low-wage jobs, despite their shorter commute, can constitute a significant burden for those with few resources. Among welfare participants, longer commutes are associated with decreased earnings and job stability.[45] Reliance on public transportation increases the probability of tardiness, which can affect job security and promotion opportunities. Commuting also implies higher out-of-pocket costs for travel. Working recipients, for example, spend four times as much on transportation than non-

working recipients.[46] Such costs may act to discourage participants from searching for and securing employment.

Comparison of Travel Behavior

A comparison of participants in Los Angeles County with two national reference groups helps frame the results of the CTNA survey in a broader context. Table 2 compares the demographic characteristics of the GAIN welfare to work population in Los Angeles County (based on the results of the CTNA survey described in Appendix 1) with two comparison groups from the 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS). The first comparison group is a nationwide sample of working-age adults; the second is comprised of NPTS survey respondents who were low-income single parents.[47]

Demographic and Travel Pattern Comparisons

GAIN participants differ greatly from the group of working-age adults in general, but have similar demographic characteristics to low-income, single parents, as shown by Table 2. Welfare participants are much more likely to be female, live in single parent households, have lower levels of education, and lower employment rates. As a result, the travel patterns of the GAIN population are also similar to those of low-income single parents nationwide and markedly differ from the travel patterns of working-age adults in general. Below, these travel patterns are compared in terms of mobility, trip purpose and mode of transportation.

Mobility. Most people make several trips each day. Because the CTNA survey only includes a partial travel diary, it does not directly measure the total number of trips taken by respondents. It is possible, however, to estimate the number of trips per day.[48] Using some reasonable and conservative assumptions, it appears that GAIN participants in Los Angeles average slightly more than 3 trips per day, including trips for all purposes, such as work, shopping, and childcare. Existing studies using nationwide data have found average daily trips ranging between 3.4 and 4.5.[49] The lower number of trips for recipients is not surprising since higher levels of mobility are associated with a higher quality of life, and people with more resources travel more.[50]

Travel distance is also important. The estimated average distance between places of residence and places of employment for GAIN participants currently working is about seven miles. This compares to about twelve miles for the working-age population and about nine miles for low-income single parents. These results are consistent with the existing research previously discussed. It is likely that welfare participants have shorter commutes because the geographic extent of their initial job search is relatively confined and because they do not have the reliable transportation necessary to hold jobs located farther away.

The final mobility travel pattern described here is hours of travel. There does not seem to be a great difference in the hours at which GAIN participants travel compared to working-age adults in general. CTNA results, though, do show a clear difference between the times that employed and job-seeking participants left home for their first trip of the day, and the time that non-

working recipients left home for their first trip. Those in the labor force travel more during peak hours.[51]

Table 2. Comparison of Demographic Characteristics, CTNA Survey & 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS)

Demographic Characteristics	All working-age adults (NPTS) (%)	Low-income single parents (NPTS) (%)	LA GAIN Participants (CTNA) (%)
Type of Household			
Single parent family	7	100	81
Two parent family	45	0	19
Other	48	0	0
Education Level			
Less than High School Degree	13	33	42
High School Degree or GED	27	48	26
More than High School Degree	42	19	33
Unknown	18	0	0
Gender[52]			
Male	50	9	7
Female	50	91	93
Employment Status			
Employed	82	50	51
Unemployed/Not Working	18	59	49
Age			
18-30	31	46	37
31-44	41	44	44
45+	28	10	11
Not Reported	0	0	8
Car Ownership			
Own a Car	92	53	55
Do Not Own a Car	8	47	45

Source: Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1995, and CTNA survey, 2000.

Trip Purpose and Mode. The travel patterns of GAIN participants are complex; in addition to work trips, a typical recipient makes multiple daily trips to fulfill family and household obligations. Among GAIN participants, work accounts for only about 11 percent of all trip destinations as seen in Table 3. This is generally consistent with the NPTS working-age adult population, for whom the majority of trips are to destinations other than work. However, and not surprisingly, the general population makes more work trips than GAIN participants. NPTS low-income single parents have trip destinations very similar to those of CTNA respondents.

When discussing travel patterns in terms of mode, it is noted that welfare participants are a very transit dependent population. Nevertheless, over half of the CTNA respondents reside in a household with at least one vehicle. This may seem surprisingly high, but is consistent with other studies. A study before welfare reform found that 65 percent of families receiving welfare owned a car or truck.[53] More recent estimates are also high, and found that 58 percent of recipients in Santa Cruz County, California owned a car,[54] 50 percent of recipients in Alameda

County, California had an "available car,"[55] and half of recipients in Michigan had access to a car.[56] Another study estimates that 64 percent of low-income, single parent households own a car.[57]

Table 3. Comparison of Trip Destination & Mode, CTNA Survey & 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS)

	All working-age adults (NPTS) (%)	Low-income single parents (NPTS) (%)	LA GAIN Participants (CTNA) (%)
Destination			
Work	18	9	11
Home	33	33	36
Shopping	14	15	13
Other	35	44	40
Trip Mode			
Car Driver	76	50	48
Car Passenger	16	22	16
Public Transit	3	14	18
Walk	4	13	16
Other	1	2	1
Work Trip Mode			
Car Driver	83	55	50
Car Passenger	9	21	10
Public Transit	4	16	26
Walk	4	8	7
Other	1	0	2

Source: Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1995, and CTNA survey, 2000.

While the rate of access to a household car for welfare participants may seem unexpectedly high, it is still lower than the car access rate of the general population. Compared with the national car ownership rate of 92 percent, the rate of car ownership and access for participants is at a deficient.

Modes of travel differ substantially between GAIN participants and the working-age population in general. Among CTNA respondents, 64 percent of the trips were taken in private vehicles, versus 92 percent among the NPTS working-age population and 72 percent among the NPTS low-income single parent group. The GAIN population is more likely to use public transit than these other groups. Closer scrutiny of the mode used for work commutes reveals that GAIN participants work trips have the lowest proportion of walking trips (seven percent) and the highest proportion (60 percent) of trips in a private vehicle.

Automobile use is related to income level and employment status, and is substantially lower among low-income and unemployed drivers. In 1990, over 75 percent of the workers in households with incomes below $5,000 commuted to work in private vehicles, but nearly 95

percent of workers in households with 1990 incomes between $35,000 and $50,000 did so.[58] Sixty-eight percent of employed CTNA respondents traveled by private vehicle compared to 56 percent of those not in the labor force according to data presented in Table 4.

The best predictor of travel mode is whether or not a household possesses a car. Not surprisingly, for households with a car, travel in a private vehicle is the preferred mode. Among CTNA respondents who owned a car, the majority of trips, 83 percent, were in a car. Even among respondents who did not own a car, about a third (35 percent) of trips were in private vehicles. This general pattern holds true for both NTPS comparison groups. Among GAIN participants who do not own cars, trips are almost evenly split between walking, transit and private vehicles.

Section 3. Transportation Needs and the Transition from Welfare to Work

This section examines the transportation needs of welfare participants in Los Angeles County as they search for work, find employment and commute to work. Participant travel patterns vary substantially according to which "stage" in the welfare to work process they are. Over half (51 percent) of CTNA survey respondents were employed, 24 percent of respondents were actively engaged in job search, and the remaining 24 percent were not in the labor force – neither employed nor actively engaged in job search.

Comparing the travel behaviors of those employed, those seeking work, and those that are not engaged in either activity, helps clarify the travel dynamics of participants as they transition into employment. This section examines trip characteristics and travel modes of participants looking for jobs or currently working, and whether they found travel difficult or problematic. In addition, this section investigates how differences in access to transportation affect participants' chances of being employed.

The key findings are:

- Approximately one half of the welfare-to-work population is employed; among those who are not working, about half are actively seeking work.
- From a transportation point of view, the job-search phase appears to be the most difficult stage in the transition from welfare to work.
- Job search is characterized by a high degree of complexity and uncertainty in transportation as participants make an increased number of daily trips to many destinations, travel to unfamiliar areas and make new arrangements for family obligations.
- Relative to those traveling by car, participants who use public transit are twice as likely to state that their job-search travel or work commute is difficult.
- The rate of car ownership and usage increases as welfare-to-work participants transition into employment.
- Transit usage (for job search or work commute) increases among those without cars in their households and among those residing in neighborhoods with good transit service.
- Unrestricted access to a household car is highly correlated with employment.
- Among those with limited access or no access to household cars, the employment rate increases with higher levels of transit service.
- Many employed participants work occasionally during weekends and/or outside of the standard workday; this creates transportation problems, especially for those relying on public transit.
- Among employed participants, the average travel distance (approximately 7 miles) is shorter than the average for other workers.

Findings in this section are based on the analysis of survey and focus group data. Additional technical tabulations from the CTNA survey are provided in Appendix 5; focus group findings are described in detail in Appendix 6, and the results from multivariate analyses are provided in Appendix 8.

Trip Characteristics by Welfare to Work Stages

Welfare-to-work requirements lead to substantial changes in recipients' travel patterns and trip characteristics. Table 4 describes the trips of CTNA respondents by their welfare-to-work "stage". For the purposes of this analysis, we divided respondents into three stages based on employment status: (1) not working and not engaged in job search (not in the labor force, or 'baseline' group), (2) unemployed and undertaking job search and/or job preparation activities, and (3) employed.

Table 4. Trip Characteristics by Welfare-to-Work Stages, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

	Not In Labor Force (Not working or searching)	Unemployed Job-Search Day	Employed Working day
Average Number of Trips per Day	2.5	4.3	3.4
More than 5 trips per day	19%	38%	27%
Travel AM Peak hours	33%	74%	65%
Mode of Transportation			
Travel By Car	56%	53%	68%
Travel By Public Transit	16%	28%	20%
Travel By Walking	25%	18%	10%
Involved in Trip Chain	12%	26%	22%

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000
Note: The columns for mode of transportation do not add to 100% because data is reported for car, public transit and walking modes only; "other" responses (2 percent or less) were excluded from this table.

As show above, welfare recipients in job-search activities experience the greatest travel burden in terms of trips per day, while recipients who are employed make more daily trips than those who are not in the labor force. Participants in the job search stage made almost twice as many trips daily compared to those not in the labor force. This can partially be explained by the GAIN job-search requirements, discussed in Section 2, which often call for participants to travel to place numerous job applications on a daily basis.

Job seekers not only have the greatest transportation needs, but they also typically rely on the least reliable and least flexible forms of transportation. They are more likely to take public transit than the other two groups, and less likely to travel by private vehicle. CTNA focus groups reveal that many participants in the job search phase attempt to offset the burden of travel by "chaining" their trips, combining travel to many destinations such as childcare and attendance in Job Club into one "trip". This, however, can prove to be difficult, particularly for those relying on public transit.

In addition to increasing the number of trips, work and job search activities generally alter the time of day that participants travel. Only a third of those who are neither working nor actively

seeking work initially leave home during the morning peak hours, compared to three quarters of those engaged in job-search. Although the proportion of those traveling during peak hours drops after finding a job, approximately two-thirds continue to leave during the peak morning hours to go to work.

The remainder of this section explores in detail the specific needs and travel patterns of participants as they look for work and as they commute to jobs.

Looking for Work

Among CTNA survey respondents, about half of those who were not employed were actively engaged in job search.[59] During the job search phase, Job Club requires participants to arrive at the site in the morning and conduct a full day of activities, as described in Section 2. This stage can be very difficult on participants because of the uncertainty associated with traveling to Job Clubs and numerous job sites that are often in unfamiliar areas. Focus group participants explain a day during the job search phase below:

> "I have to fill out applications, I mean everywhere, all around the Valley. I tried to look for a job from Van Nuys, Panorama City. Well, I got papers, printouts from the EDD office, and all of the jobs were in Reseda, Canoga, and Pacoima and there was only one here in Van Nuys."

> "And then they want us to fill out of a various applications on one day, and like yesterday, Friday, we have to fill out four. And starting Monday, and everyday after, it will be six applications. I think that's somewhat impossible, like you, even if you have a car…I have a car and it's so hard for me…I couldn't fill out four yesterday. I went to Reseda, to Canoga, went to Chatsworth, came back, got my kids from school, took them back to my sister and I just couldn't. I got home at six."

The average distance from a GAIN participant's residence to the nearest GAIN/CalWORKs office, shown by Table 5, is 3.5 miles, while the average distance to the nearest Job Club is slightly longer, 4.5 miles.[60] However, approximately 17 percent of participants live six or more miles away from the nearest GAIN/CalWORKs office and 30 percent are six or more miles away from the nearest Job Club.[61]

Very few welfare-to-work participants find low-skill jobs in the same neighborhood where they live; as a result most participants need to commute to their jobs using one mode of transportation or another. Participants, like most other workers in the county, must travel to other neighborhoods to reach employment; their average home to work distance is around seven miles. Although this distance is not large compared to the national average (12-13 miles), focus group participants report that many job leads, sometimes leads for better paying jobs, are far away. Several participants commented on forgoing higher paying or better jobs due to long distances and transportation burdens, as expressed in the statements below:

> "It would have been more money than what I make. So in that sense, I did turn the job down. Now, I'm not saying that I was guaranteed to get it, but I thought that just with the

travel time that that would be too much for me with uh, being a single parent. It's not easy without a car. So I did turn the two jobs down. I just didn't respond at all. And um, my GAIN worker, he told me that wasn't a good decision, but I told him, I said I thought it was for me."

"And the high paying jobs are in LA…with the good benefits, they're usually too far to get to. So you compromise and take the eight dollars an hour where you could have the ten dollars or twelve dollars and hour all the way in LA…I mean, if you live in Pacoima and you gonna drive every single day—which is forty five minutes to LA, you're not gonna do it without a reliable car."

"I could make ten dollars an hour. But if that job was out in Valencia, I couldn't get there. So I, you know, had to lose that job."

Table 5. Travel Characteristics and Perceptions of Travel Difficulty, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

	Mode of Transportation Usually Used for Work or Job Search		
	Car*	**Transit**	**Other****
Job Seekers			
Travel for job search is difficult	29%	60%	41%
Transportation is a problem in finding or keeping a job	35%	61%	41%
Average distance to nearest GAIN/CalWORKs office	3.7 miles	3.0 miles	5.0 miles
Average distance to nearest Job Club	4.5 miles	4.4 miles	5.0 miles
Employed			
Commute to work is difficult	21%	52%	16%
Transportation is a problem in finding or keeping a job	31%	60%	43%
Average commute distance***	8.0 miles	7.3 miles	2.8 miles
Percent traveling 11+ miles	24%	18%	5%
Estimated time starting work after leaving home[62]	67 minutes	103 minutes	66 minutes

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000

* Indicates travel in a private vehicle as a driver or passenger.

** Most 'other' trips were walking trips, but this also includes trips made by bicycle and taxi.

***Average commute distance is measured as rectangular distance, not actual travel distance.

While participation in Job Club by the non-exempt is required, not all of those assigned to Job Club attend, as discussed in Section 2. Some may undertake a job search individually by finding a job without traveling to a potential job site as part of Job Club activities. Tabulations from the 1996 AFDC Job Readiness survey of welfare participants in Southern California suggest that 42 percent found jobs through referrals from friends and relatives.[63]

The relative difficulty of job search activities varies systematically with the type of transportation used, as presented in Table 5. Relative to those traveling by car, transit users were twice as likely to state that their job-search trips were somewhat or very difficult. In fact, the majority of transit users evaluated their trips as being difficult and stated that transportation

problems make it hard for them to find or keep a job. The average distance to the nearest Job Club or GAIN/CalWORKs office is lower for transit users than for car users, but travel by transit frequently takes longer than an equivalent trip by car and may be more difficult because of the need to make transfers.

In light of the substantial difference in the difficulty of conducting job search by auto and transit, most participants use private vehicles whenever possible while seeking work. This can be seen in Table 6, which reports on those who actively traveled to look for work during the week prior to the survey. Nearly nine-tenths of those with *unlimited* access to cars in their households (that is, the vehicle is available any time) choose to travel by car. The few people who used public transit tended to reside in areas with good transit service. The majority of those with limited access to cars in their households, where a vehicle is available only some times, traveled by car for job searches. Even among participants who live in households that do not own a car, a fifth traveled by car either as drivers, borrowing a vehicle from someone else, or as passengers riding in someone else's car.

Table 6. **Mode of Travel by Car Access and Employment Status, GAIN Participants Los Angeles County, 2000**

	Travel Mode Used for Work or Job Search		
	Car* (%)	**Transit (%)**	**Other** (%)**
Job Seekers			
Unlimited Access to a Household Car	89	7	4
Limited Access to a Household Car	53	34	13
No Car in Household	22	71	7
Employed			
Unlimited Access to a Household Car	90	3	6
Limited Access to a Household Car	47	32	22
No Car in Household	28	55	17

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000

* Indicates travel in a private vehicle as a driver or passenger, and includes borrowing a car.

** Most 'other' trips were walking trips, but this also includes trips made by bicycles and taxis.

Clearly public transit is generally not the preferred choice of travel for job search activities since it does not enable participants to cope with the complexities and uncertainties of job searches. Participants from the focus groups pointed out several problems with using transit for job search activities. These problems include difficulties with scheduling and planning trips since full buses sometimes pass by participants. Others cited fear of getting lost and finding the correct bus routes as a problem. The following focus group participant described how her job-search trip ended in failure:

> "This was for a driving position on Burbank that I had to go to see about. But because of limited funds and not knowing where the location was at, I got lost. So I turned back around, paid the other fare and just come home."

Additionally, many participants felt that using public transit was time-consuming, and some expressed safety concerns.

Despite the problems of public transit, about two-fifths of participants who used transit found it a viable mode of transportation. Moreover, the usefulness of public transit hinges on the quality and frequency of service. For those who were not employed, a higher level of transit service near a participant's home is correlated with being actively engaged in job search activities (Appendix 8B). Finally, it should be noted that despite the relative advantage offered by car travel, car ownership is not a panacea, as discussed later in Sections 5 and 6.

Securing a Job

Job searches are not always immediately successful. Among those who participated in Job Club during March of 2000, less than half were able to find employment during their initial three weeks of participation.[64] Welfare participants face numerous barriers in securing a job, including childcare obligations, lack of education, and lack of work experience. In addition, poor transportation access during the job search period appears to translate into a lower probability of successfully finding employment. This is substantiated by the employment ratio by level of access to a household car. Sixty-four percent of those with unlimited access to a car in their households were employed at the time of the survey, compared to an employment ratio of 44 percent for those with limited access to cars in their households, and an employment ratio of 44 percent for those with no access to household car.[65]

Access to a car seems related to whether participants in the labor force are employed. Among those in the labor force, that is, among those who are either working or actively seeking work, four-fifths (80 percent) of those with unlimited car access were employed at the time of the survey, compared with two-thirds (66 percent) of those with a limited access, and only 59 percent of those with no access to household cars. A similar analysis based on the mode of transportation used for job search or commuting purposes, shows that eighty-three percent of those using a car were employed, while only 67 percent of those using public transit were employed.

Although each of the above estimates presents some weaknesses, they nonetheless reveal a consistent result for each sub-sample of survey respondents – access to an automobile seems to have a significant impact on the likelihood of finding a job. However, we do not know if access to a car *causes* employment. Instead, employment may enable working participants to purchase a car. Other research, however, seems to indicate that access to a car does have a positive effect on employment.[66] This may be due to employers preferring job applicants with vehicles and/or reliable transportation arrangements. Often, job applications ask about reliable transportation, even if the job doesn't directly require having a car, and commonly during the interview process, job applicants are asked if they have reliable transportation to get to work. In addition, focus group participants who rely on public transit often miss out on job opportunities; for example, a group of Job Club participants was not referred to a job opening because they relied on public transportation, as demonstrated by the statement below:

> "If you're lucky, if you have a car, [the job developer will] give you job leads. Cuz yesterday, he started to give us one. As soon as I told him we didn't have a car, we were on the bus, he [the job developer] was like, 'oh, oh well, forget it.'"

Public transit may also increase job turnover. Because public transit is sometimes unreliable and time consuming, it can cause a worker to be late, leading to a higher job termination rate. One participant recalled the transportation difficulty she had with her previous job:

> "It would take about, uh, forty, `bout an hour, and fifteen minutes total. Well, no it was actually a lot longer because when I got off of a bus, I would have to wait forty minutes for the bus to take me from the bus station to my work. So, probably an hour and a half, two hours. Just to get there the whole thing, my, the problem with the transportation, I didn't have a car, and, uh, my job, but as company of three hundred people depended on me to be there on time everyday because nobody there knew how to do my job, except me, and my boss, you know and I felt really bad when I'd be late so I finally had to let that job go… "

Again, it is important to keep in mind that the findings refer to the relatively greater effectiveness of car access in increasing the employment rate. Car ownership also presents problems, which are discussed in Sections 5 and 6.

Commuting to Work

The relative difficulty of commuting varies systematically with the type of transportation used, as depicted in Table 5. Fifty-two percent of those commuting by transit stated that their commutes were difficult and 60 percent stated that transportation problems made it hard for them to find or keep a job. Relative to those traveling by car, transit users were twice as likely to report such difficulties. The difference in the difficulty of commute between those using transit and auto does not seem to be due to differences in travel distance, but rather to each group's estimated travel time to work. The estimated average time for transit users is almost twice the time for car users.[67] Those using other modes, mostly walking, were the least likely to report that their commute is difficult. This could be because many of their jobs are close to home, affording them the option to walk to work.

As with job search and other trips, most participants use a private vehicle for their work commute whenever possible. This can be seen in the bottom half of Table 6. Nine-tenths of those with unlimited access to a car in their households choose to commute by car. The few who used public transit even though they have unlimited access to a car reside in areas with good transit service. Of participants with limited access to a car in the household, nearly half traveled by car to work and even among those without a car in their household, over a quarter traveled to work by car. Interestingly, job seekers who do not have a car in their households use public transit more than employed participants without cars, 71 percent versus 55 percent. This may indicate that as participants' transition from the more chaotic travel patterns of the job search to the more predictable travel patterns of employment, they are able to make car-sharing arrangements. Also notable is the fact that among those with limited or no access to a household car, transit usage increases with the level of transit service (see Appendix 8C), suggesting that in areas with low transit service it is likely that more people have to secure rides as passengers in other people's cars.

As was mentioned above, the home to work distance for GAIN participants is not that lengthy ; however, travel times can be long, especially on public transit. Additionally, many employed participants work at least occasionally during weekends and/or outside of the standard workday. This creates transportation problems for those relying on public transportation, since transit service is less frequent during weekends and non-peak hours, and safety is a concern for women traveling alone, especially after dark.

Section 4. Childcare and Health Care Travel

This section describes the transportation challenges that welfare to work participants face in balancing work and family obligations, focusing on needs related to childcare and health care trips. Employment and job search can affect the ability of participants to adequately meet family obligations, such as transporting children to and from childcare/school and accessing health services. Welfare-to-work participants rely heavily on support networks and family in order to help them meet both their transportation needs and other obligations, such as childcare. Regardless of such support networks, these obligations may make it difficult for participants to complete welfare-to-work requirements.

The key findings of this section include:

- The presence of younger children (ages 0-4) decreases the odds of currently being employed and increases the odds of perceiving transportation as a major problem in finding and keeping a job.
- Welfare-to-work requirements increase participants' need for and use of childcare. About a third (35 percent) of those not working and not actively searching use some form of childcare, while two-fifths (42 percent) of job seekers and 84 percent of employed respondents use childcare.
- The most common type of childcare involves relatives, friends and neighbors caring for the children; employed participants tend to use more formal, paid childcare arrangements.
- The relative supply of nearby licensed care slots increases the likelihood that a child receives licensed care over other types of care, although the relative supply of nearby licensed care slots does not seem to impact the overall level of childcare usage.
- Job searchers and welfare-to-work participants who rely on public transit report the greatest difficulties with childcare trips.
- Trips for job search and work often impact the amount of time school-age children are left unsupervised and whether they can participate in after school activities.
- Almost three-quarters of participants made a health-related trip in the previous six months; one-half of respondents perceive transportation as a problem to receiving health care.
- Nearly one-third of participants report that a lack of transportation has prevented them or a member of their family from receiving health care in the past.

Child Care Travel Demands

Welfare-to-work participants transitioning to self-sufficiency not only have to find work, but also have to arrange childcare for their children. In many cases, childcare imposes new travel needs on participants, especially when children are young.

Childcare for Younger Children (0-4 years old)

Among families with children age 4 years or younger,[68] over half (58 percent) use some form of childcare.[69] The most common type of childcare involves having a relative, friend or neighbor

take care of the children. Most families, 37 percent, leave their children with paid relatives or friends, while 23 percent leave children with unpaid relatives and friends.[70] Others use more formal childcare arrangements such as daycare centers (23 percent) or daycare homes (11 percent). The presence of younger children decreases the likelihood of currently being employed and increases the probability of perceiving transportation as a major problem in finding and keeping a job.

Welfare-to-work requirements change participants' need for and use of childcare, as demonstrated by Table 7. Searching for a job or working increases the use of childcare; only about a third (35 percent) of participants not working and not actively searching use childcare, compared with two-fifths or 42 percent of job seekers. The highest rate of childcare usage, 84 percent, is among the employed.[71] Employed participants also tend to utilize more formal childcare arrangements than do job searchers or those not currently in the labor market.

Table 7. Type of Childcare by Employment Status, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

Type of Childcare	Not Working or Actively Searching (%)	Unemployed, Actively Searching (%)	Employed (%)
Unpaid Relative, Friend, Neighbor	9	18	13
Paid Relative, Friend, Neighbor	10	12	36
Day Care Centers and Homes	13	11	30
Other	2	2	5
No Childcare	65	58	16

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000

Among all families who use some form of childcare, 19 percent have their children cared for in their own homes and therefore do not need transportation to childcare; however, the remaining 81 percent require some means of transportation to access childcare services. Most survey respondents (70 percent) stated that they were responsible for taking their young children to and from childcare, most frequently traveling to childcare by car (54 percent) followed by bus (23 percent) and walking (17 percent).

For welfare-to-work participants traveling by transit, childcare travel arrangements are often time-consuming and costly, as described below by one focus group participant whose one-way commute is almost 3 hours and costs $5.40 for herself and her three children:

> "I get up at five o'clock to shower and everything else…From five thirty I have to get the kids up, get them ready and feed them and then get them ready to go to the babysitter's house. I have to pay for their transportation from my house to their [babysitter's] house. And their rate is the same as mine. So I gotta pay $1.35 for each one of them. And there's three…. And by the time I get there its already six thirty. So I get ready at the babysitter's house and then I catch the bus from her house back to Firestone and then from Firestone I catch it all the way up this way…. Then I get here about eight thirty…. And then I gotta pick up—go through the whole same routine all over again and bring them back home."

Although the travel distance to childcare varies depending on the type of childcare provider that participants utilize, participants generally travel short distances for childcare. Participants who use license-exempt providers, including paid care provided by family, friends, and neighbors, generally travel the shortest median distance (0.1 miles), compared to participants who use licensed childcare facilities, which generally travel a greater distance (1.7 miles). The utilization of license-exempt care greatly lowers the travel burden of participants.[72]

Welfare-to-work programmatic requirements also impact the ease in transporting young children to childcare. Participants in job-search activities experience the greatest difficulty in traveling to childcare. About half (52 percent) of job searchers state that their childcare-related trips are difficult, compared to only 36 percent of those not working and not searching. The employed are the least likely to experience difficulties, with only a quarter (26 percent) stating that their childcare trips are difficult.

The difficulties of childcare travel may vary between these groups due to differences in schedules, recent experience using childcare, and the mode of travel. Employed participants, for instance, tend to have a more fixed schedule and travel pattern than job seekers, which are more likely to experience constant changes to their schedule. Participants who are employed may also be more likely to have recent experience with childcare and may have been able to resolve a number of transportation difficulties. Job seekers, on the other hand, may have to adjust to delivering children to childcare for the first time in the midst of traveling to Job Club and numerous job sites per day. Difficulties of childcare travel may also vary due to differences in the mode of travel. Half of those relying on public transit state that their childcare-related trips are difficult, while only a quarter of those using a car report difficulties with childcare trips. Notably, employed participants are much more likely to use cars than job seekers.

One focus group participant described the difficulty experienced while trying to search for a job and make child care arrangements:

> "If I go and look for jobs in between that time to the time I go and pick them [children] up, I'm on the bus all day long. Until five. So it takes me maybe…from anywhere to two to three hours, you know coming back and forth—like yesterday I went all the way to Long Beach for an interview and they kept me there for two hours. Came all the way back over this way and I had to pick up the kids and then bring them home through my route and I didn't get home until five."

The availability of nearby licensed care, or day care centers and homes, has a strong influence on the type of childcare that participants use. There are enormous variations in the relative supply of nearby licensed care across Los Angeles County (see Figure 1). Table 8 describes the type of childcare that CTNA respondents used according to their proximity to nearby licensed care. Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents with children under 4 reside in neighborhoods with less than 30 licensed childcare slots per 100 younger children, compared to 39 percent residing in neighborhoods where the ratio of licensed slots is less than 15 per 100 younger children. While the relative supply of nearby licensed care slots does not seem to impact the overall level of childcare usage, it does influence the likelihood that a respondent uses licensed care over other types of care. Among those respondents who reside in neighborhoods where the ratio is 30 or

more licensed slots per 100 younger children, 44 percent use some type of licensed care compared to 24 percent who reside in neighborhoods with a ratio of 15 or less slots.

Table 8. Childcare Usage by Availability of Nearby Licensed Care, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000[73]

	Number of Licensed Slots per 100 Younger Children (0-4 years old)		
Type of Childcare	**0-15 (%)**	**16-30 (%)**	**30+ (%)**
Unpaid Relative, Friend, Neighbor	27	19	23
Paid Relative, Friend, Neighbor	40	40	30
Day Care Centers and Homes	24	39	44
Other	10	1	3

Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Since most families rely on license-exempt care, usually located close to home (see Figure 2), childcare related trips are often not a problem for participants. As they move to licensed care, however, the travel distance for childcare increases and may add greater burdens.

School-Age Children

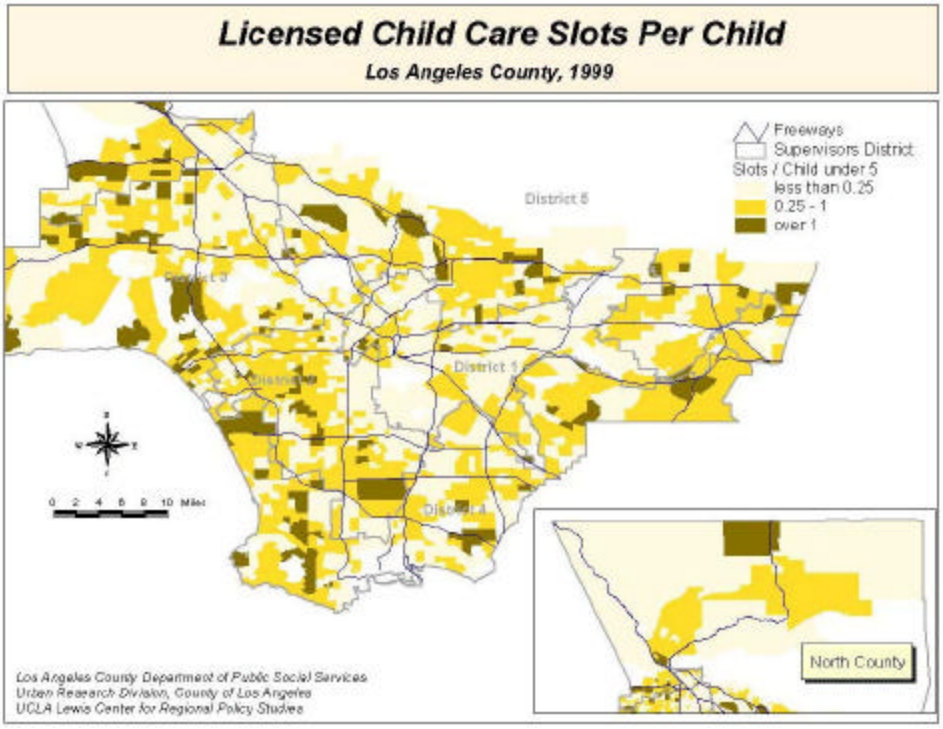
Welfare families with school-age children have different needs. The majority of children between 5 and 12 do not go to after-school activity/care, but instead go home after school (71 percent), as do 81 percent of teenagers between the ages of 13 and 18. Approximately a quarter of children between the ages of 5 to 18 participate in some type of after-school activity.

Almost half of participants with children between 5 and 12 pick up their children from school or after-school activities/care; 48 percent of these participants use a car to get home, 42 percent walk, and only 9 percent take the bus. Even fewer participants pick up older children (ages 13-18) from school or after-school activities or care: only 21 percent. Among those who do pick them up, the majority (88 percent) uses a car to get home.

Parents of teenagers express the need for childcare services for older children, and concern over the time their children spend alone. When parents work late or must rely on slow transportation, their children are often left unsupervised. Focus group participants were very concerned that their children would be left unsupervised and that getting home late would limit their time with their children, as show in the statement below:

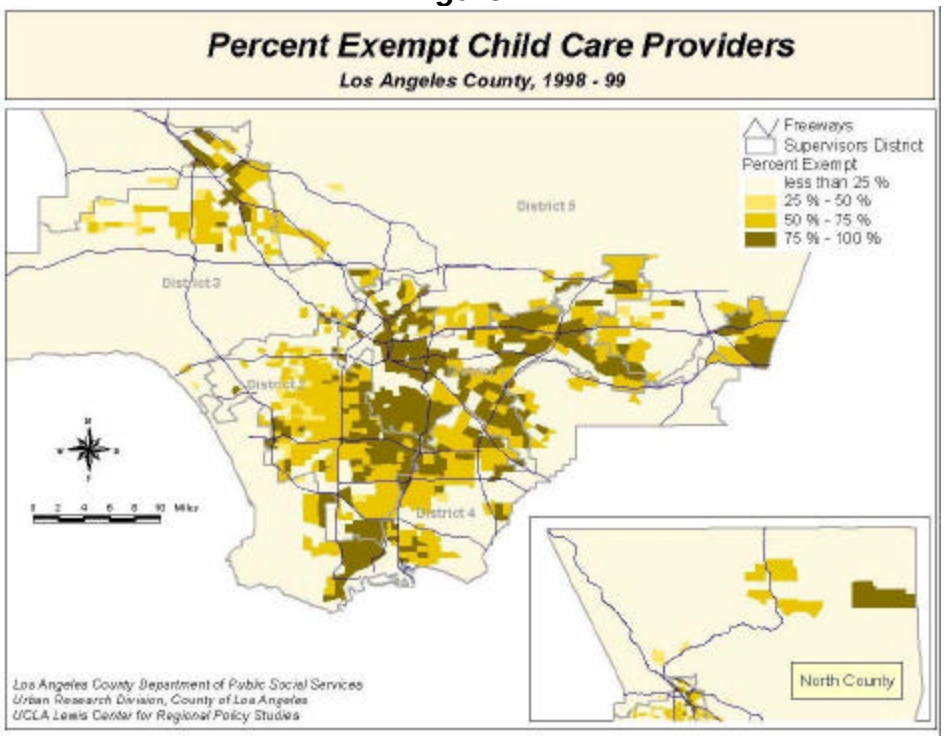
> "And the bus—I, if I had taken the bus home—for instance, I got out of work at five. It was eight-thirty to five. I wouldn't have been home 'til like around seven. And my daughter, you know, she gets home at three. She'd be unsupervised from three 'til seven. […] So I, I had to quit. And it's only because of transportation that I can't get a job."

Figure 1



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Figure 2



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Focus group participants often felt that transportation difficulties impacted their quality of life and that of their children. Many agreed that it was difficult to manage children on the bus. Others said that because they spent so much time traveling to and from work on public transit, they now left children at childcare or alone for longer periods and some said that they lacked time and/or transportation means to take their children to after-school activities. Participants also discussed the frustration of trying to pick up their children after school or in case of emergencies. Several statements are provided below:

> "I just moved! I just moved. I was living on – in Sherman Oaks. Just a block away from Ventura Boulevard. And I totally miss it. Because out there, there was lots of job opportunities on Ventura Boulevard…Um, now I live here. Why I had to move there was because I had to live somewhere where my daughter can walk home from school and back. Where I didn't have to drive her to middle school every day and have to pick her up from middle school. So now that's like one less worry."

> "Transportation is a problem … you need to have a car because if you're work in Valencia and my kids go to school out here, there's an emergency at school or something, what am I going to do, jump on the bus, and still take three hours to get back home before you can get them…"

> "You know, I work in Pasadena and I live in Glendale. So it means, like I need a car. And especially when you have kids and any problems at school or anything, you have to just leave the job and rush, you know, to see the children and so its essential."

Travel to Health Care Providers

This section analyzes families' needs regarding transportation to health care facilities, recognizing the importance of preventive health measures as a condition for achieving long-term self-sufficiency.[74]

The majority of the survey respondents, 72 percent, had visited a health care facility within the past 6 months to receive services for themselves or a family member. The most common transportation mode to health care is driving a car (42 percent), followed by taking the bus (25 percent), and getting a ride in someone else's car (21 percent). A small proportion mentioned walking to health care facilities (6 percent). For approximately one-half of the welfare-to-work participants, transportation is perceived as a problem in receiving health care and almost one-third of the participants respond that the lack of transportation has prevented them, or a member of their family who depends on them for transportation, from receiving health care in the past. Again the mode of transportation plays an important role in the perceived difficulty of travel to health care. Transportation to healthcare is a problem for 28 percent of those without a car, compared to 12 percent for those with a car.

Focus group participants described instances in which transportation prevented them from access to health services:

> "And I have a private doctor which also the state picked for me. The doctor's great, but it's also hard for me to get transportation for me to get there. There's times I miss appointments because I don't have a ride to get there. I have to walk. It takes me about forty-five minutes to walk to the doctor's."
>
> "I couldn't take her [my daughter] to the doctor's. The doctors before prescribed me like cough medicine. Because she like coughs and she can't breathe. So I gave here some cough medicine and you know, and let her—and she finally relaxed, but I couldn't just get up and say we're going to the hospital. I—you know, I have to wait for somebody to take us. But usually people are at work."

The stage in the welfare-to-work process may also affect the ease with which participants are able to access health care. As participants move into job search and employment, travel for health care can become more complicated. Flexibility becomes limited because health appointments must be scheduled around job-search and work obligations and participants may not have the luxury of sick leave and flexible work schedules that allow them to take time off for health care visits. Several focus group participants express the difficulty balancing transportation, work obligations and health care visits for themselves and their children:

> "Because those things happen and, you know, when your kids get sick at school, when you can't take off and go and get them, you have to have somebody that's gonna pick them up for you, you know? Until you can get off and get them to the doctor or have them get them to the doctor"
>
> "With my kids… I might have a slight emergency. I can't get home, even if I don't have no car, if the buses stop running after seven o'clock, if I told my boss, well, look I need to go home because I got an emergency. I'll still got to figure out who going to get me to the house, see."

Survey results show that smaller proportions of working or job seeking participants report visiting a health care facility in the past 6 months relative to participants who are not actively in the labor force. While overall 72 percent of respondents reported a health care visit in the past 6 months, 79 percent of non-working, non-searching participants reported making a visit compared to 69 percent of employed participants and 70 percent of participants searching for work. This may suggest that job seekers and the employed may be delaying or deferring health care visits, but it is also quite likely that some participants who are not working or seeking work are not doing so precisely because of illness or poor health.

Focus group participants reported that when they can plan their health-related trips in advance, they do not view transportation as a major problem; they can usually rely on family or friends for help and either use their own car or get a ride/borrow a car. However, they do express great concern in dealing with children's emergencies while they are at work or job search, especially those without access to a reliable car. Some participants experienced difficulty riding the bus to medical facilities, especially during nights and weekends; this resulted in participants calling 911, receiving care in emergency rooms, or delaying treatment because of concern about riding

the bus when feeling ill. Several focus group participants commented on the difficulties reaching health care due to transportation concerns:

> "Sometimes you have difficulty going to the doctor, cause you don't have the money to get to the bus or you just feeling so bad, you know, to ride the bus so lets just stay home…I just stayed home and wing it out, you know, you don't want to get on the bus, you don't feel good, you don't feel good enough to get dressed. You know, enough to be presentable to be on the bus, and you don't go you just stay home."

> "When I have gotten sick and there has not been transportation I call 911 and the ambulance comes. Usually if my neighbors are home I ask them, but here in Temple City the bus is not close by and it comes by every hour. To take the El Monte bus which comes by every 20 minutes I have to walk to Kidree which takes me 30 minutes."

CalWORKs families are eligible for medical coverage under the California Medical Assistance Program, Medi-Cal.[75] In recent years, California has made efforts to phase out traditional fee-for-service arrangements, where the state reimburses individual health care providers for services rendered to covered individuals. By 1999, just over half of Californians enrolled in Medi-Cal were covered by managed care plans, and the majority of CalWORKs participants receiving Medi-Cal coverage are required to enroll in a managed care plan.[76] Fee-for-service allows covered families a high degree of provider choice, but many providers shun Medi-Cal because its payments are low and its claims processing slow. Ideally, managed care will result in greater quality of care for covered families, but managed care plans restrict provider choice to specific physicians and facilities.

Focus group participants expressed that the shift to Medi-Cal managed care arrangements, primarily Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO), sometimes resulted in longer and more complicated travel arrangements for participants. Like everyone else, participants want clinics, general practitioners, and specialists close to home, which for some is difficult to achieve at least in this period of transition to HMOs. Although participants are given choices of plans and providers, they are required to navigate, usually on their own, the very complicated landscape of HMOs and managed care. Additionally, many families are 'defaulted' to specific plans and providers if paperwork is not received within a designated time period; often these default assignments are not sensitive to the location of provider networks in relation to participants. The new managed care arrangements may also make it difficult for participants to access care at local community clinics and traditional safety net providers because those providers may not be in the plan that the participant selected or was assigned to.

One participant expressed her problems with HMOs and access to providers in the statement below:

> "They hook you into the HMOs and it's an automatic thing. You send in a paper, but it's still an automatic thing where they pick a doctor for you and everything. So you send 'em a little paper later and try and get it changed, but like I say, I'm in San Pedro, they put me at a doctor in Southgate. Which is another three hours on the bus. I tried to get referrals to an eye doctor from, from the doctor, he sent me to some doctor in Chinatown [laughter].

> I needed an ultrasound down, they sent me on Wilshire for one. I needed a mammogram; they sent me on Vernon and Broadway. And I said, you know, do you have anything in Torrance? In Inglewood? Somewhere within an hour?"

Employment has the potential of moving participants off Medi-Cal to employer-based health insurance plans. Unfortunately, only a small minority of working participants qualifies for such plans. A high percentage of firms, including those with entry-level positions, offer health insurance to their work force, but eligibility requirements and employee premium contributions represent significant barriers to employer-based health insurance for employed welfare-to-work participants.

Employment obligations, inflexible work schedules and reliance on public transportation, coupled with the shift to managed care arrangements marked by geographically dispersed provider networks, affect the ability of participants to access health care services. Transportation is perceived as a barrier to accessing health care services by nearly half of participants surveyed, and over one-third report that they have forgone medical treatment for themselves or their families due to transportation constraints. Regardless of the source of insurance coverage (Medi-Cal vs. Employer-Based) or the type of providers used, transportation is a crucial component to accessing medical services.

Section 5. Transportation Problems and Policy Preferences

The transportation needs of participants are shaped by the activities and experiences described in previous sections. Welfare-to-work requirements may impose many trips to fulfill job-search and work activities. Job search trips can be complex and frequently involve uncertainties as participants travel to unfamiliar locations. Participants who use public transit face difficulties in identifying appropriate routes, which may be complicated by the need to make multiple transfers to get to job sites. In addition, crowded buses and limited transit availability in certain neighborhoods and at certain times of day contribute to the transportation burden.

This section attempts to better understand the travel needs of participants by examining the transportation problems faced by three groups of participants: car drivers, car passengers and public transit riders. This section also discusses the preferences of these groups for both auto and transit related programs hereby helping to identify programs that participants believe would be most beneficial as they face the transportation challenges presented by welfare-to-work.

The key issues identified in this section are:

- On a typical day, over half (63 percent) of all participants' trips were by car, either as a passenger or a driver, 18 percent were on public transit, and 16 percent were walking.
- Many welfare participants without access to a car ride with friends or relatives rather than rely on public transit. For every ten trips on a bus or train, there are nine trips as a passenger in a private vehicle.
- Participants who travel by car are significantly less likely to report trip difficulty compared to those using other modes of travel; this finding holds for job-search, work commute, childcare and health care trips.
- Despite the usefulness of an automobile in meeting welfare to work and family obligations, recipients with a household car report problems related to reliability and cost.
- Participants have a strong preference for programs that facilitate ownership of a reliable vehicle, such as auto loans and help with insurance costs.
- About two-fifths of participants who used public transit found it a viable mode of transportation, that is, they reported that it was relatively easy to get to and from their activities using public transportation.
- The higher the level of public transit service near a participant's home, the more likely a participant is to use public transportation. However, public transit is not often the preferred choice of travel since it increases the difficulty of planning and completing complex work and household-related trips.
- Travel by public transit can be difficult for participants because of the difficulty identifying appropriate routes, the lack of direct lines (requiring transfers), crowding, buses passing by at stops, limited off-hour runs, and the inconvenience of transit for making multiple work and family-related trips.
- When asked about ways to improve public transportation, most participants prefer more frequent and reliable transit service regardless of whether they live in areas with high or low levels of transit service.
- The availability and reliability of public transit varies greatly from one neighborhood to another; roughly a third of participants live in areas with low levels of transit service.

- GAIN participants need backup transportation services for emergencies regardless of whether they have access to reliable transit or a private vehicle.

Private Cars – Transportation Problems and Policy Preferences

As described in previous sections, cars can be valuable resources for participants as they transition from welfare to work. Car travel provides participants flexibility and convenience as they face the complexity and uncertainty of work-related trips on top of their multiple household responsibilities. Over half of all trips reported by survey respondents are taken in cars (63 percent), and most of those are as drivers (47 percent of all trips). Despite the relative advantages that cars provide, they posses their own set of problems and challenges.

Table 9 shows the level of access to cars among participants according to their status as drivers or car passengers. While over half of all participants reside in a household with a car (54 percent), only about a third (36 percent) have unlimited access, that is, they can use the car anytime.[77] Participants with limited access, who cannot always use the cars, are less likely to make trips as drivers. These participants are only one-third as likely to drive as a participant with unlimited access to a household car, and as expected, sharing a car translates in less direct access to a car. This is partially offset since those with limited access may have higher odds of being a passenger. Interestingly, the pattern for those with limited access to household cars is very similar to the pattern for those who can borrow non-household cars; the probability of being a driver or passenger are roughly the same. For many participants, having friends, relatives or neighbors who are willing to lend cars mitigates the lack of a vehicle within their households.

Table 9. Levels of Car Access by Mode of Travel (Drivers and Car Passengers), GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

	All Participants (%)	Drivers (%)	Car Passengers (%)
Unlimited Access to a household car	36	74	19
Limited Access to a household car	18	13	25
No household car but borrowed a car	15	12	30
No household car and unable to borrow	30	0	26

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000

Additional results using multivariate techniques provide some insights into the factors that affect car access, and indirectly car ownership (see Appendix 8F). This analysis shows that car access increases with past earnings and age. One major finding is that minority participants (African Americans, Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders) are less likely to have access to cars than are white participants. This is true for both unlimited and limited access to autos. Furthermore, multivariate techniques suggest that automobile access is related to the level of transit service near a participant's residence. The analysis reveals that car access, and indirectly car ownership, increases as the level of transit service decreases. This analysis may, however, be interpreted the opposite way: transit service is highest in areas with low levels of car usage, precisely because

transit providers focus their services in areas where it is most needed. It appears that public transit and private vehicles act as substitutes for each other.

Car Drivers: Problems with Car Ownership

The cars owned by participants or members of their households are often problematic. Some focus group participants stated that their cars are not registered, and many of their vehicles are not functional. The CTNA survey found the majority (69 percent) of the cars owned by welfare families are 10 years or older, and one-sixth (17 percent) are not covered by insurance. There is also evidence that vehicle maintenance is a problem. Over half (55 percent) of the respondents had at least one mechanical problem over the last three months that prevented them from getting to their destinations, and nearly a quarter (23 percent) had three or more mechanical failures. Not surprisingly, fifty-nine percent of participants state that mechanical problems are one of the two major problems with owning a car.

Often the threat of potential mechanical problems becomes a decision factor for participants who are job searching. A South Bay resident with an unreliable car demonstrates this in her statement below. She describes her reluctance to take a job for fear of getting stranded far from home:

> "Oh, so since then I've looked for jobs on my own since I've finished the job club. And I did get hired for-- I went to an agency and I did get hired, but it was in Thousand Oaks and I didn't really have a car. I was gonna *try* it, but-- my mother's clinker. I was using her car and I said no, I don't wanna get stranded. And it was the hours I wanted, three to eleven, but I was like-- I couldn't take that chance [laughs] in that car."

The costs associated with owning a car can also become decision factors for job-seeking participants. Focus group participants report weighing potential job opportunities against the costs associated with owning a car, as one participant explains:

> "…I could make ten dollars an hour. But if that job was out in Valencia, I couldn't get there. So I, you know, I had to lose that job. And I can get plenty of jobs if I just-- well, Cindy, you gotta get a license. Well, I can't, I gotta get insurance and that's the only way I can get my license, if I get insurance. I can't afford that. And so it's just the lack of transportation. I mean, I even thought about taking the Metro to Valencia, but the hours are-- they won't compromise with the jobs."

Car Drivers: Program Preferences Related to Car Ownership

In order to establish what types of programs participants perceive to be the most beneficial, survey respondents were presented with a closed list of four different car-related policy programs that the county has been considering and asked the participants to rank these programs from the most to the least helpful. The programs presented were: (1) a program to help get a car loan; (2) a program to help maintain a car and provide emergency road service; (3) a program that helps buy liability insurance at a lower cost; and (4) a program to help clear parking tickets.

The results reveal that the highest percentage of participants opted for help to secure a car loan as their first choice among the four listed options, see Table 10, confirming the importance of car ownership. The majority of participants, including those who already have a car, prefer this choice.[78] It is also noted that the preference for this type of program increases as participants have less access to a car.

Table 10. Auto Related Program Preferences by Level of Car Access, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000[79]

	Percentage Ranking Program as First Choice			
	Help getting a car loan (%)	**Help maintaining car / emergency road service (%)**	**Help buying lower cost liability insurance (%)**	**Help clearing parking tickets (%)**
All	53	16	19	12
Unlimited Access to a household car	39	18	25	17
Limited Access to a household car	49	13	24	14
No household car	66	16	11	7

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000

The importance of car ownership was also confirmed by focus group discussions where participants expressed enthusiastic approval of proposed programs that would reduce the costs of owning and maintaining a car, such as subsidies for car purchase, repairs and insurance. During these discussions, focus group participants agreed that cars allowed them to cover more distance in much less time, were convenient for making the multiple trips required by family life, and they felt safer and more private in cars than on public transportation. Below a couple of participants express their preference for cars:

> "Give me my money, I'm getting a car [laughter]. Because transportation in Los Angeles is a big issue. Distances are too, you know, too big and too far."

> "In my circumstances, right now, as this point, I don't own a car, or, uhm, the future I probably will own one, but I would go with the first thing, the program to help me get a car loan. Now second one would be… help me with the liability insurance, of low cost. Then I would go for the program, … that helps you, you know, case of 'emergency at side of the road. And I don't get tickets, and I don't plan to get any, but that would, most definitely would out that one last. Yeah, if they would help *ooo-wheee*!"

The consistencies between survey results and focus group preferences confirm that participants view car ownership as an important and beneficial means in establishing employment and transitioning to work. Focus group participants chose car loan programs and programs to assist with insurance costs as their first and second priorities regardless of their level of auto or transit access (Appendix 5, Table 12). The option least favored by survey respondents was assistance in clearing parking tickets. Focus groups also revealed that a number of participants did not see the proposal to help clear parking tickets as financially significant or on the level of importance as

the other options. One participated also suggested that getting tickets is an individual's fault and paying for them is not the responsibility of the County.

Car Passengers – Transportation Problems and Policy Preferences

One of the unanticipated findings of the CTNA is the significant number of participants who travel as passengers in private vehicles. The CTNA focus groups and survey found that, for many, getting a ride from a friend, relative or neighbor is an important way to look for work, transport children, go to health care services, and commute to work. Participants also used rides for other purposes, such as shopping, traveling to social services, and a host of other activities.

Participants are very resourceful in arranging car travel and often rely on friends, relatives and others to borrow a car or secure a ride. Focus group participants revealed that mothers and grandmothers provide rides most often, followed by siblings and friends. Participants also relied on neighbors in case of emergencies, though they were cautious not to ask for too many favors that they could not return or did not want to return in the future. Below, a focus group participant describes what it is like not to have a car and why she hesitates to ask for rides:

> "Just not havin' a car! [laughs] You know, not having a car is very strenuous. It's hard. It, it cuts down on your daily "to-dos". You know, things that you have to do and put off because you don't have it. And waiting for someone to help you out and whatnot. But, you know, with family and friends it's a little easier but you still don't like to bother with puttin' someone else in the inconvenience of goin' on their time too. 'Cuz I mean, you only have so much in your day and then you have to squeeze into their day so that things will work out for you. So, I mean, by not having it, it's very hard."

Unfortunately, the CTNA was not designed to gather extensive and specific information on these types of riders, or their needs and preferences. Nevertheless, there is sufficient information to make some inferences. On a typical day, about a quarter (24 percent) of the adult participants who travel make at least one trip in a vehicle as a passenger, a number only slightly lower than the number of trips made on public transit. For every ten trips on buses or trains, there are nine trips as passengers in private vehicles.

Being a passenger helps fill gaps in household resources. Over half (56 percent) of the car passengers reside in households without cars. Moreover, riding in a vehicle with someone else often serves as a complete substitute for public transit. Nearly half (45 percent) of these car passengers did not use public transit in the previous week, which indicates that a significant number of participants in households without cars rely on car rides rather on public transit.

Many focus group participants indicated they preferred getting a ride to taking public transit when a car is not available. One woman described the reasons for her preference of rides over public transit this way:

> "I have a car, I basically ride a car. But when it's broken, I have to find a ride, because I cannot rely on the bus. The bus is usually, one time I tried to get a bus to go to my job and then to leave my daughter to school. As she said, it's like every hour they go by, so

> just to go there to the bus stop is like four blocks away from my house. Then from there to get to my daughter's school and my job is like taking maybe ten buses. So that time was really hard for me… So I cannot really rely on the bus because I would like to, but it's not convenient for the time. I mean, if I decide to go to my job or with my kid to school in the bus, it would take me maybe like two hours."

Fearing that she will get lost, another participant avoids public transportation altogether preferring to rely on family and friends for rides until she can get a car:

> "I'm scared first of all because I don't know the bus routes. And since I have my child with me, what if I get lost? So, I've never dealt with the bus. I was just too scared of the bus. So, I've always had family, friends, or I finally got my own car."

Among car passengers, 56 percent do not have a car in their household. Another quarter (25 percent) of all car passengers reside in a household with a car but have only limited access to the car. It is likely that many, if not most, of this group receive a ride from another person in the household. However, over two-thirds (70 percent) of car passengers with limited access to a household car reside in single-parent households (i.e., FG cases). This implies that an adult in the household who is not a member of the welfare case may own the car. The remaining one fifth (19 percent) of all car passengers have unlimited access to the household car. Focus groups suggest that this group gets rides because their cars are not working, are unreliable, or because carpooling is more convenient.

Table 11. Household and Personal Characteristics by Mode of Travel (Driver and Car Passenger Status), GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

Household and Personal Characteristics	Driver (%)	Passenger in Private Car	
		Also used other mode (%)	No other mode (%)
In neighborhoods with low # of bus stops*	39	34	45
No Drivers License*	6	45	45
Singe-parents with younger children*	35	44	48
Received transportation payment from DPSS*	5	15	8

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000

*Statistically significant differences, based on Chi Square statistical test for each row. For instance, in the table above the percentage of each group (drivers, passengers who used another mode and passengers who used no other mode) who had no driver's license is statistically significant.

Table 11 suggests that participant household characteristics and level of relative transit access are related to whether a participant is a car passenger. Survey respondents are broken into three groups based on their travel patterns for a given day – (1) those who drive, (2) those who use at least one other mode along with being a passenger and (3) those who were car passengers and used no other mode (i.e., all of their trips were as passengers in a private automobile).[80]

Car passengers, particularly those who did not use other modes, are more likely to reside in areas with relatively low transit service. These passengers may partially compensate for a relative lack of transit service by arranging car rides. Many passengers do not have a driver's license, so it is difficult for them to become a driver, even if a car is available. Many are single parents with younger children (aged 0-4), and may have a particularly hard time using public transit.

Many participants rely on an informal system that offers rides for a fee. Focus group participants revealed that family members or acquaintances sometimes charge a fee to provide them with a ride. In fact, some people make a little business and help solve the transportation problems of the poor by shuttling them around. Focus group participants also indicated that in some cases participants of the same Job Club assist their car-less comrades to potential job sites:

> Shirley: You have to caravan with somebody [in Job Club]. Hopefully, they'll let you go with `em.
> Facilitator: You mean if somebody has a car?
> Shirley: Yeh, somebody has a car.
> Facilitator: People help each other out?
> Carrie: Our last class, we were—
> Shirley: --we was like family. We all go along…together, so we all helped each other.

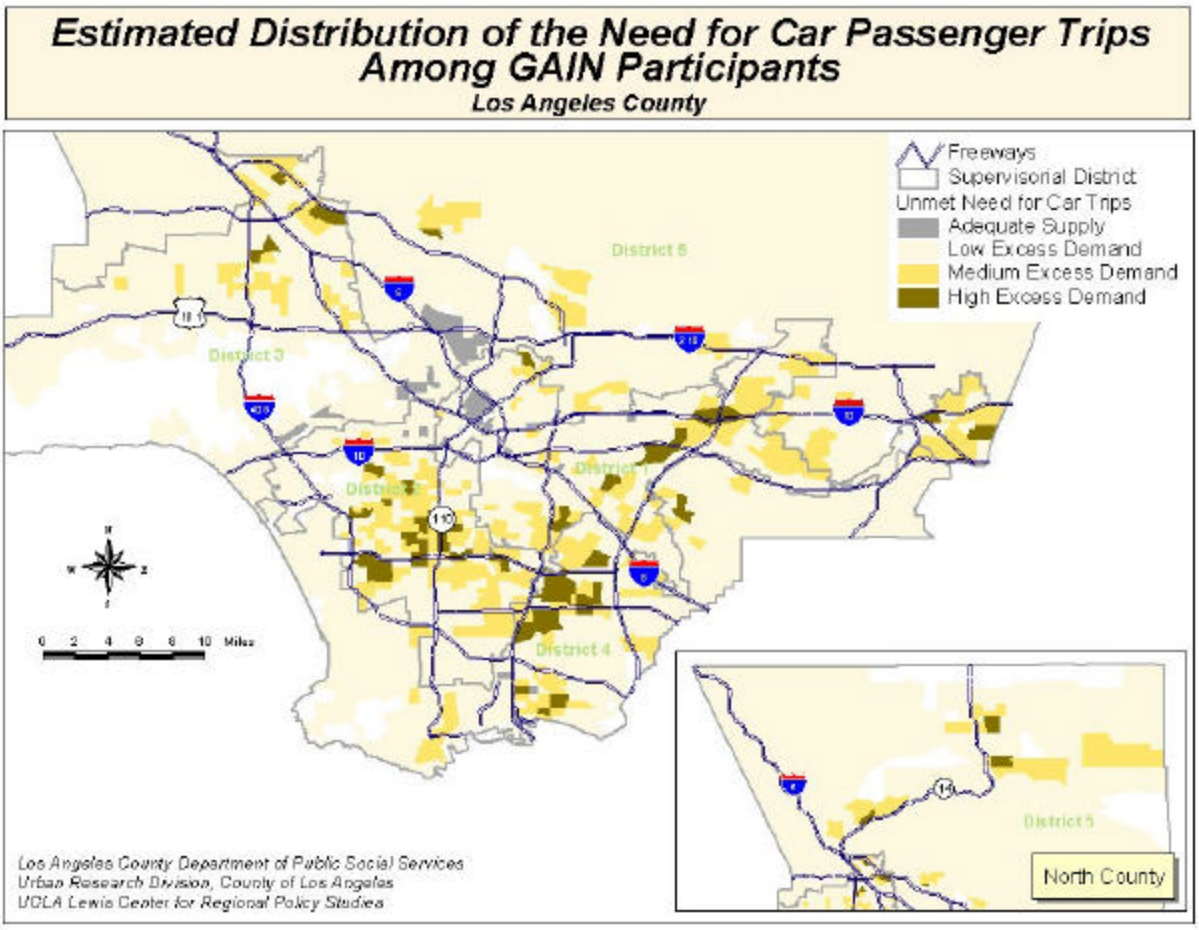
Previous research by Genevieve Guiliano also suggests that informal neighborhood carpools are an important means of travel for low-income people in Los Angeles:

> "Neighborhood carpools are rides given in private automobiles by the owner to a neighbor or acquaintance for a small fee. In a study of neighborhood carpools in Los Angeles, Professor Guiliano found that the drivers of the cars are usually female and that driving their neighbors where they need to go is a source of income for them. The passengers are mostly female, have no access to a private vehicle, and are very low income. The drivers are motivated by earning extra money and by helping others. The passengers use neighborhood carpools because they offer decreased travel time, increased personal safety, increased convenience, and a low price. The price is universally $1.00 per trip."[81]

Although this research does not identify explicitly that women that use these informal carpools are welfare-to-work participants, it may be safe to assume that these carpools may be a viable, affordable means of transportation for participants. GAIN's transportation supportive service, which provides assistance for transportation costs, does not facilitate reimbursement to friends, relatives and acquaintances that provide rides.

Figure 3 provides a relative description of those areas of Los Angeles County in which the demand for work-related car trips may exceed the number of participant-owned cars.[82] This suggests those areas in which participants may have a higher need to arrange passenger-rides with friends or relatives. This map shows that car passengers are not only concentrated in areas with a high density of welfare-to-work participants; they are both within and outside the inner city.

Figure 3



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Car Passengers: Problems with Passenger Travel

Participants who are car passengers must often face the same problems that car owners face, cars are often unreliable and break down. In addition to mechanical failures, car passengers must depend on another individual to provide the ride, creating another layer of potential unreliability. These factors bring a level of uncertainty to the trips of car passengers. A focus group participant even reported leaving a good-paying job far from home for a lower paying job closer to home because she could not afford car insurance and her arrangement to get a ride with a friend broke down:

> "I went to school and graduated as a computer office specialist and um, I got a job –my friend and I – she was taking me to work every day. But then she couldn't take me to work anymore, and I would have to take the bus and that was on Lassen. There's like hardly any buses on Lassen. And, it's like a little street; it's not a major street. And um, you know, I drove my car to work. And being real nervous about it, but after another month, I, I quit. Because I couldn't handle it anymore, I was too nervous [driving without insurance]."

This participant considered taking the bus, but the longer travel times on the bus meant that her daughter would have been left at home unsupervised. She tried to drive her own car, but still had problems affording car insurance and eventually quit the job. She stated: "… and now I'm not even working at it [finding a job]… you know, it's just like I am stuck."

Car Passengers: Program Preferences Related to Passenger Travel

In order to establish what types of programs participants perceived as the most beneficial, the CTNA survey presented respondents with a closed list of the same four car oriented programs described for car drivers in the Car Drivers: Program Preferences Related to Car Ownership section above, as well as four public transit programs. They were asked to rank these programs from most to least helpful.[83] The results provide insight into the program preferences of car passengers.

As shown by Table 12, there is a strong desire for car ownership, particularly among those who did not use other modes of transportation other than riding as auto passengers. Over two-thirds (70 percent) of all riders without a car state that they do not own a car because they cannot afford one. There is no single program, among the listed transit programs, that the majority of participants prefer; however, more frequent service received the greatest number of responses. These statistics confirm observations from the CTNA focus groups showing that many car passengers would like to eventually become car owners, and when they must rely on public transit, they would like to see more frequent service.

Table 12. Auto Program Preferences by Mode of Travel (Driver and Car Passenger Status), GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

		Passenger in Private Car	
	Driver (%)	**Used Other mode (%)**	**No other mode (%)**
Car Loan as 1st Choice among Auto Program Options*	43	52	65
More Frequent Service as 1st Choice among Transit Programs Options *	28	38	33

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000
Note: Table only includes CTNA survey respondents with at least one trip in a private vehicle
*Statistically significant differences, based on Chi Square statistical test for each row.

Transit Users – Transportation Problems and Policy Preferences

Public Transit Riders: Problems with Transit Travel

As previously discussed in Section 3, public transit is often not the preferred choice of travel for participants since it does not enable them to cope with the complexity and uncertainty of work in combination with household-related trips. Nevertheless, about 40 percent of survey respondents found public transit a workable alternative. A few participants discussed positive aspects of the

transit system, as demonstrated by the comments below, praising the timeliness of routes and the safety provided by new onboard video cameras:[84]

> "I'm thankful we do have a bus though, make it a little better you know. I really like those new buses that have those video cameras on them. I like a little security for myself and my child."

> "I like the public transportation. It takes away the responsibility of driving. It is more reliable than in your own car."

> "I do not have that many problems with the bus. I usually use my car, but when I have used it I have liked it. It has come on time and I have not wasted time. My wife tells me why she uses public transportation more than I do because she likes is and it always comes on time. She likes it more so now because there is a new smaller bus that costs $.25 which is reasonable."

While some participants commented positively on the transit system many did not. Participants who are public transit riders face a variety of problems, which focus group participants present in the statements below.

Full buses sometimes pass them by, making their trips difficult to plan:

> "Sometimes they'll [buses] pass you up. And then you have to stand there for another forty-five minutes and wait for another bus. Hopefully, that one isn't crowded and don't pass you up."

Some reported that buses are often overcrowded:

> "I got on the bus and it was so packed that I didn't have anywhere to hold on to and when the bus stopped, I fell. You know, I hated that. I didn't like that at all. People were like laughing and I got up and I, it was like I wanted to cry, you know, and cus [laughter]. But I just got off the bus and I walked home."

Buses are especially inconvenient and stressful when parents are dealing with children and shopping:

> "I have three children: 7, 2, and 1. It's hard getting on the bus with the kids. Oh man, the stroller, I rather just not go anywhere. You know, if I can really avoid taking my children, I just, I stay at home. My children remember the nightmares of going grocery shopping on the bus. It's sickening, you know, you have all these bags, and sometimes forget things and frustrated with kids. Thank God for my car, raggedy as it is."

It is difficult to find the right routes:

"You get lost on the buses, you know, because, or transfer to the wrong bus. Because you don't know what bus to get on."

Survey respondents also reported problems with the transit system. Of those respondents who used public transit in the last 6 months, 67 percent had one or more transfers, 60 percent were passed by at least occasionally or sometimes, 55 percent stated that they felt unsafe at least occasionally or sometimes and the average waiting time was 22.5 minutes[85]. In order to establish participants' primary problems, respondents were asked an open-ended question that allowed them to suggest their two biggest problems with using transit. Twenty-seven percent responded infrequent service or waiting, 27 percent stated crowding, 21 percent stated remaining on schedule, and only 7 percent stated expense (see Appendix 5, Table 8 for additional details).

Table 13 displays transit-related problems by four geographic categories or areas based on the relative level of transit service and the relative density of welfare-to-work transit riders. There are clear differences in transit-related problems across these neighborhood types. For example, crowding is a particular problem for respondents in areas with a high level of transit service and a high density of welfare-to-work transit riders.

Table 13. Transit Problems by Level of Transit Service and Density of Welfare-to-Work Transit Riders in Geographic Area, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

	Level of Service / Density of Welfare-to-Work Transit Riders			
	High Service/Low Rider Density	**Low Service/High Rider Density**	**High Service/High Rider Density**	**Low Service/Low Rider Density**
Problems				
Transfers (1 or more)	65%	70%	68%	64%
Bus Passes By*	61%	60%	70%	55%
Wait Time*	17.7 min.	23.4 min.	20.0 min.	24.5 min.
Feel Unsafe*	38%	59%	52%	56%
Among two biggest problems using transit				
Infrequent Service*	23%	23%	26%	32%
Crowded*	25%	25%	37%	21%
Bus Late	16%	21%	18%	23%
Expensive	10%	9%	6%	6%

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.
Note: Table includes only CTNA respondents who used public transit within the last 6 months
*Statistically significant differences, based on Chi Square statistical test for each row.

Public Transit Riders: Program Preferences Related to Transit Travel

In order to establish what types of programs participants perceived as being the most beneficial, survey respondents were presented a closed list of four possible public transit programs, and asked to rank them according to their preference. The public transit options presented were: (1) a transit pass that allows you to ride for free any time on any public transit system in LA County;

(2) More frequent bus service, for example, buses that run every 10 minutes; (3) a ride home from work in case of emergency; and (4) a shuttle service, that is, a shuttle or van that picks you up at home, drops you at work, and then takes you home at the end of the day.

The ranking results, shown in Table 14, reveal little variation. Twenty-four percent of participants chose free transit pass, 31 percent selected more frequent service, 26 percent picked emergency ride, and 19 percent selected the shuttle service. Although 'more frequent bus service' was chosen as the preferred program by the largest percentage, the differences between the other choices was small, and all four options represent interesting alternatives for participants (see Appendix 5, Table 10). These results seem to show that with public transit, no single program helps solve all of participants' problems. A combination of different public transit programs, to address differing needs, should be the appropriate policy recommendation for the improvement of public transit.

Survey respondents were also asked an open-ended question, asking them if there was anything else that they thought would help them get around more easily on public transit. The answers to this question reveal a clearer sense of priority: participants prefer increased service over assistance with out-of-pocket costs of transportation. They feel it would be helpful if the public transit system had more frequent service, less crowed service (33 percent), buses that arrive on time (9 percent), closer bus stops (6 percent) and lower fees (9 percent). Differences in program preferences depend on the type of area that a respondent resides in, as displayed by Table 14. Those in areas of high level of service are *more* likely to want better or more frequent service. A majority of those who experienced infrequent service preferred more services, and an even larger majority of those who experienced crowding preferred more frequent service.

Table 14. Transit-Related Program Preferences by Level of Service and Major Transit Problems in Geographic Area, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

	Geographic area where participant resides			
	Area with low level of transit service (%)	**Area with high level of transit service (%)**	**Area where crowding is a problem (%)**	**Area with infrequent service (%)**
Rank First of Closed List				
Free Pass	22	30	26	26
More Frequent Service	32	29	31	35
Emergency Ride Home	27	24	25	25
Shuttle	20	18	20	17
Open ended responses				
More Service*	30	41	61	52
On Time*	9	10	12	14
Lower Price / Free*	9	8	8	8
Closer Stop*	7	3	3	6

Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.
*Statistically significant differences, based on Chi Square statistical test for each row.

Focus group participants also said they wanted more frequent bus service, especially in suburban areas such as Palmdale or Lancaster, and more frequently scheduled buses on nights and weekends. They also recommended monthly bus passes, which would be interchangeable

between transit agencies and allow participants to ride free for a specified distance such as two miles.

Section 6. Matching Existing Transportation Services to Participants' Needs

This section focuses on the demand for transportation services generated by the welfare-to-work population, and matches that demand against available services throughout Los Angeles County. These services included not just public transit (bus and rail) resources, but attempted to capture the full range of transportation services including carpools and vanpools, specialized transportation services, and other more informal means of transportation. The goal of matching demand against service is to determine if the existing services are able to accommodate the growing demand for transportation services as the welfare population transitions to work. The findings of this analysis highlight various areas of the county in which available services may be insufficient to adequately accommodate the various transportation needs of the GAIN population.

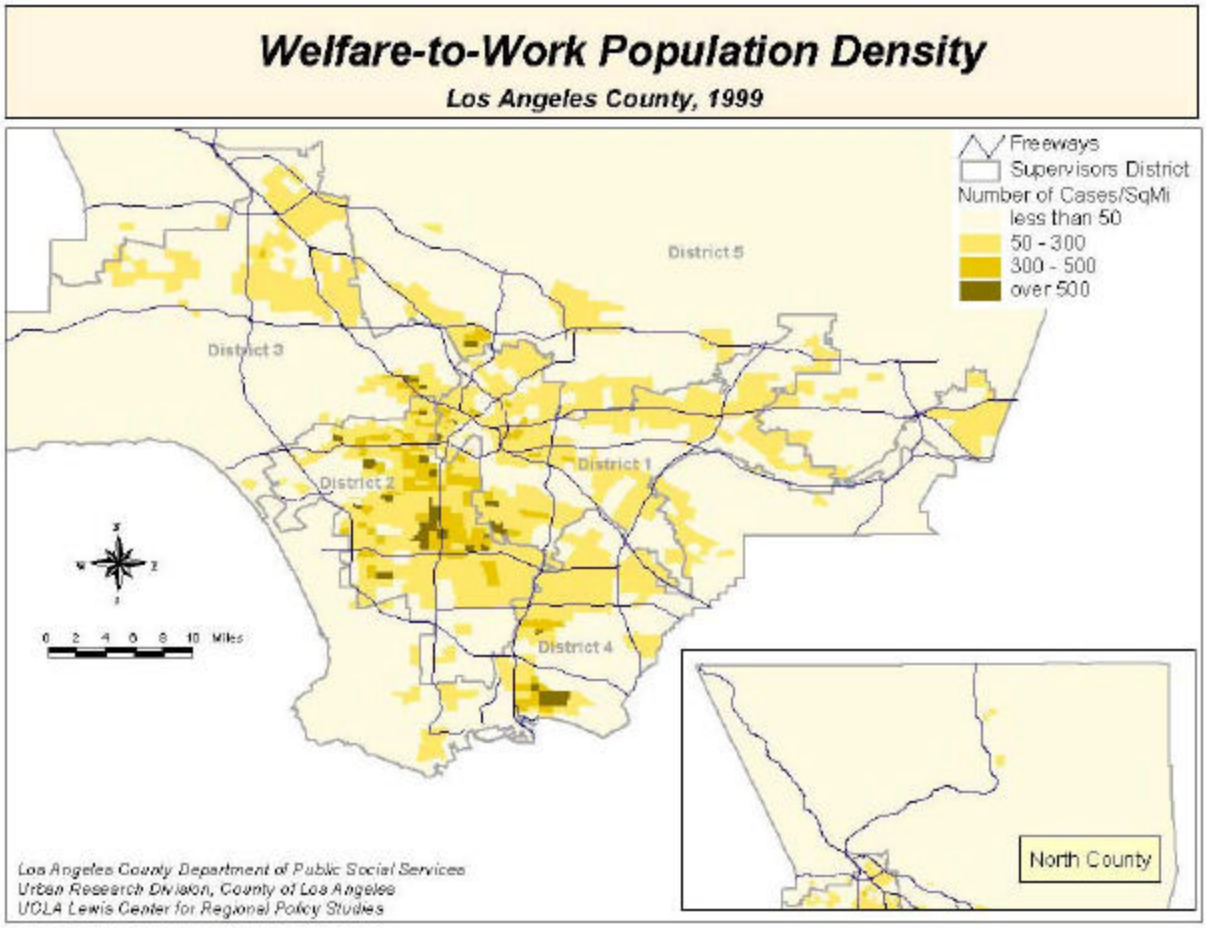
The key findings of this section are:

- The GAIN population is highly concentrated in the central portions of the County.
- The neighborhoods where welfare participants live generally do not have a significant number of jobs for which GAIN participants are qualified.
- The home to work distance for most GAIN participants is about seven miles, which is considerably less than that for many other major metropolitan areas.
- While travel by car is the preferred method among the welfare-to-work population, car ownership is beyond the resources of many GAIN participants, and public resources may be insufficient to bridge that gap.
- Transit accessibility varies widely throughout Los Angeles County, but in general, transit accessibility is higher in areas that correspond to the residential and potential job locations of the welfare-to-work population.
- Transit accessibility varies considerably by time of day and is considerably lower during "off peak" hours; this means that GAIN participants who work during those "off-peak" hours are likely to find only limited transit service.
- Job accessibility, a crucial factor in transitioning to employment, varies widely throughout Los Angeles County, and by mode of transportation.
- Participants who travel by car have much wider job accessibility than those who must rely on public transit.
- There are wide areas of the County that have both low levels of transit accessibility and low levels of job accessibility. Participants who live in these areas, which account for roughly 36 percent of the current GAIN population, are significantly disadvantaged in their ability to transition to full employment.
- Individuals who live in areas with low levels of transit accessibility need to rely on modes other than transit. This will require the development of more creative public programs, which could be built around the encouragement of formal and informal carpooling, and the mobilization of other flexible forms of transportation.

Ascertaining Demand Generated by the Welfare-to-Work Population

In order to investigate the demand for transportation services generated by the Welfare-to-Work population and match that demand against available services, we need to first locate the programs' participants. While the GAIN population can be found throughout Los Angeles County, it tends to be concentrated in specific geographic areas. This spatial concentration is evident when we examine the residential locations of the current GAIN caseload. Each of the active registrants aged 18 to 60 were extracted from the GAIN database and address-matched to a specific location on the map.[86] In turn these locations were summarized by transportation analysis zones (TAZ), and appear in Figure 4.[87] As is apparent, the welfare-to-work population resides in the central portion of the County, with the heaviest concentrations located along the 110 Freeway between the 10 and 105 freeways, with other significant clusters located in Long Beach, Hollywood, and Glendale.

Figure 4



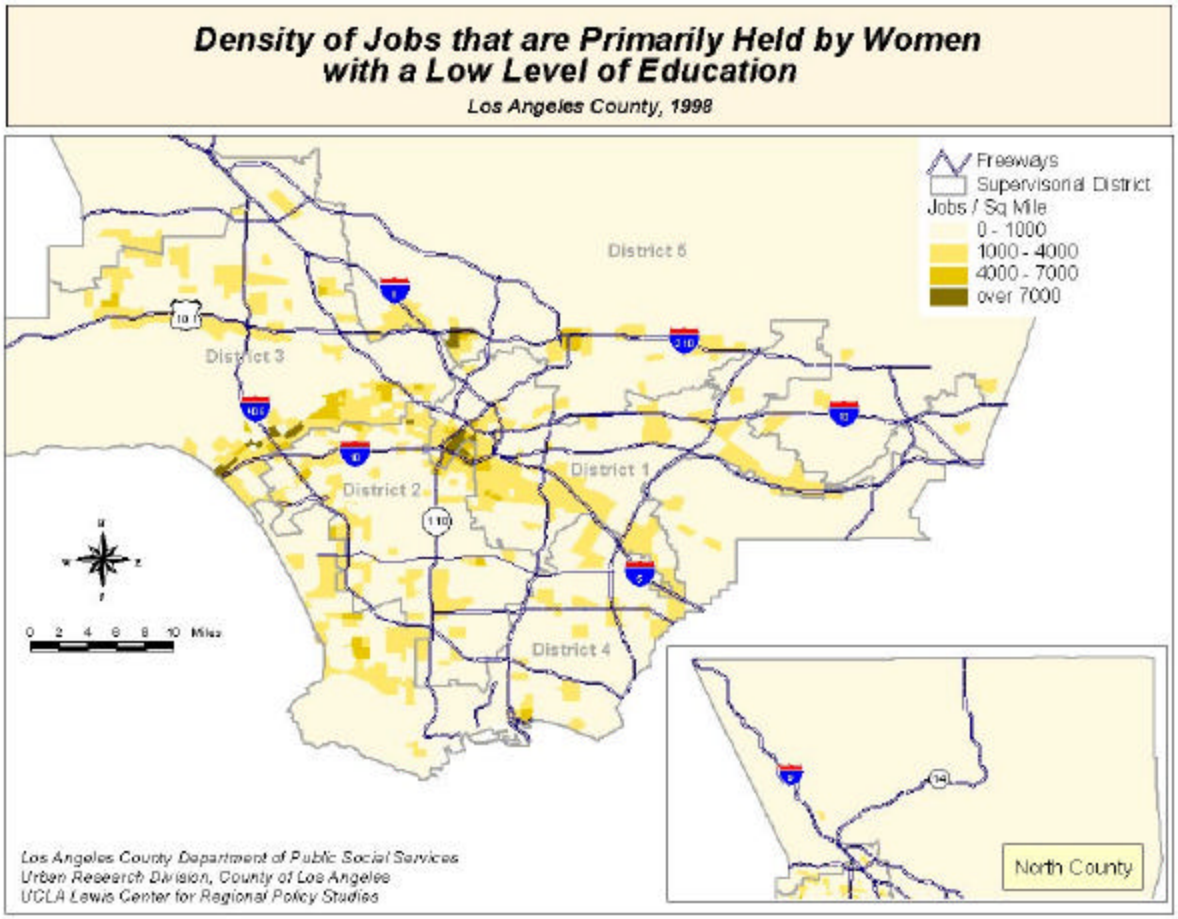
Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

It is from these residential locations that we determine the specific transportation needs and requirements associated with access to jobs, childcare, and health-care services. For the purposes of helping participants transition into the work force, the location of employment is the most important of these factors.

Correctly identifying the type and location of employment opportunities available to the welfare-to-work population is critical in identifying current and future transportation demand. Not all job opportunities will be available to this population, and identifying the specific occupations in which the GAIN population will likely find employment is important to accurately predict transportation demands.

Women are roughly 82 percent of the GAIN population, the majority of which have a high school education or less (68 percent). As a result, the occupational survey data was used to identify jobs in which 50 percent or more of workers had less than a high school education, and in which more than 50 percent were women.[88] From this analysis, the locations of the greatest numbers of skill-matched jobs were identified. As shown in Figure 5, the largest concentrations of low education, female majority jobs occur just east of downtown Los Angeles, in Pasadena and Glendale, and along a corridor from Downtown west to Santa Monica, including portions of Hollywood and West Los Angeles.

Figure 5

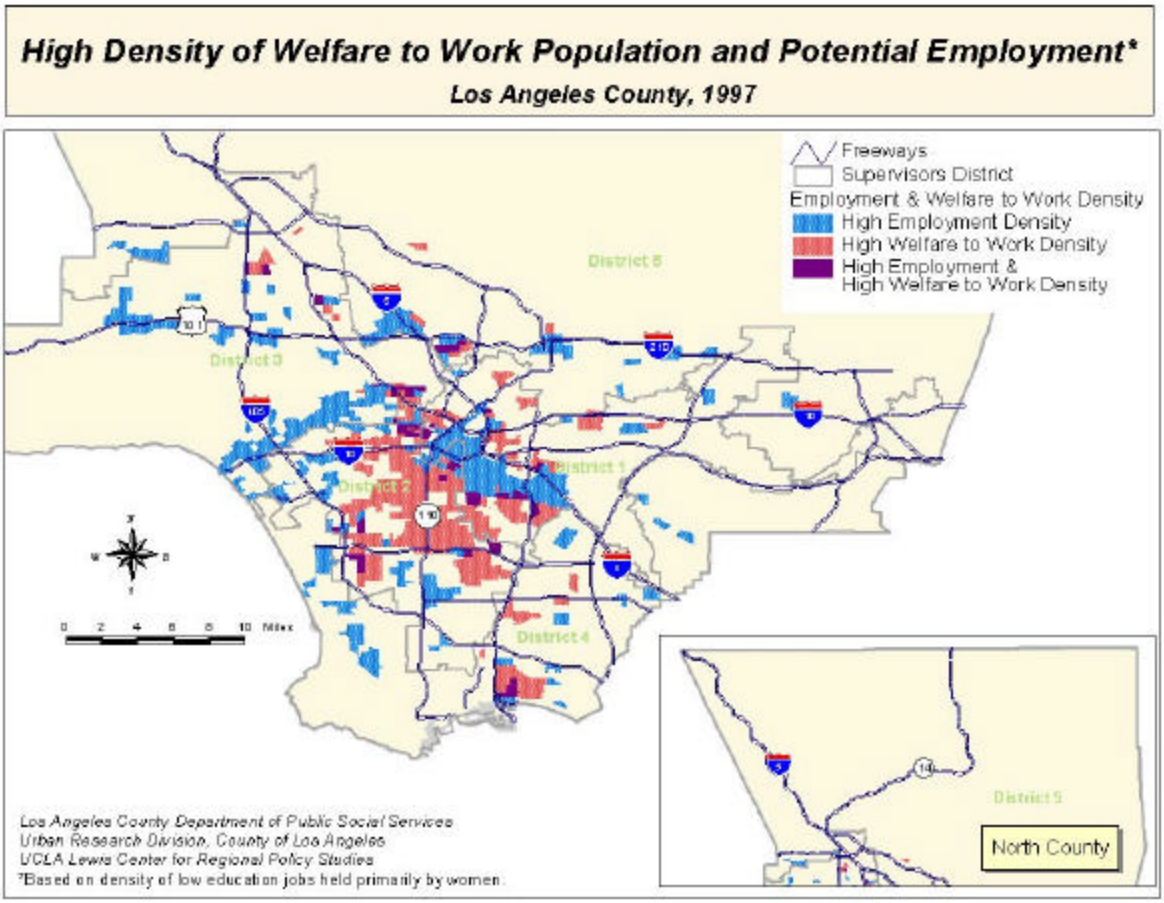


Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Analysis of the location of skill-matched jobs and residential locations of the welfare-to-work population reveals two important facts. First, the locations where low education, female majority jobs are concentrated generally does not overlap with the residential locations of the welfare-to-

work population (see Figure 6). As a result, there will be fewer job opportunities close to home for the GAIN population, which is important, because previous studies have suggested that greater neighborhood availability of jobs is correlated with lower rates of welfare usage. This in turn will mean that the transportation requirements will be more complex, as welfare-to-work participants need to travel outside of their immediate neighborhoods for employment.

Figure 6



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

The second fact derived from the analysis is that Los Angeles County's data does not mirror the pattern of typical Eastern cities within the U.S. Large concentrations of welfare-to-work participants are not located in the older central city, and the majority of jobs are not located in the distant growing suburbs. Los Angeles County's data shows home to work travel distances of employed GAIN participants to be an average trip length of just over seven miles.[89] While skill-matched jobs are not typically found in the welfare-to-work population's neighborhood, a travel distance of seven miles does not reflect the substantial "spatial mismatch" found in Eastern cities.

Method of Travel

The welfare-to-work population relies on different transportation options for traveling, and the mode of travel will affect the ease or difficulty encountered in accessing jobs throughout Los Angeles County. Each of the three separate groups we have identified (car drivers, car passengers, and public transit users) will have different needs as they make the transition to work, and each are examined in turn.

Car Drivers

Like almost everyone else in Los Angeles, the greatest preference among the welfare-to-work population is for travel in automobiles. This should not be surprising, given the convenience and flexibility that auto travel affords. Because car access produces positive employment outcomes and lowers the burden of travel, it is not surprising that many recipients without a car want to purchase an automobile, and many recipients with a car want to replace their aging and unreliable vehicles. Unfortunately, car ownership is not easily attainable or maintainable because of high costs relative to available income.[90] Most recipients have an upper limit on what they can afford to pay for a car because of limited available income as well as eligibility rules for public assistance programs. Even if a recipient can find the financial resources (loans, help from families and friends, etc.) to purchase a car, asset limits for public assistance programs place a cap on the value of a vehicle one can own and still be eligible for aid.[91]

Low incomes and program eligibility asset limits effectively force recipients into the lower end of the used car market. A simple analysis of the Los Angeles used car market provides some insight into the supply of used vehicles that would allow recipients to remain qualified for CalWORKs, and/or Food Stamps.[92] Among used cars with a purchase price less than $5000 dollars, the average age of vehicles is 11 years and over three quarters of the cars are over 10 years old. The newest used cars available within the price range are 1994 models, with an average asking price of about $4,300 and an average of 85,000 miles.[93]

After finding a car within their means and under the eligibility asset cap, most recipients would need to finance the car purchase. Obtaining credit is difficult for most welfare recipients due to low wages, a lack of stable attachment to the labor force, and problematic credit histories. Aside from a lack of credit options, purchasing a used vehicle also carries burdens in terms of financing. Older vehicles translate into higher interest rates and more prohibitive financing options. Generally, the rate of interest on car loans increases with the age of the car being purchased due to the depreciation factor, and often banks will not provide car loans for vehicles that are more than 10 years old.

Beyond purchasing issues, there are operating and maintenance problems. Older vehicles have higher costs associated with maintenance and operation. Operating costs, specifically fuel costs, are also higher for older vehicles because of less efficient engine technology and increases in fuel efficiency requirements mandated by government. In addition, older cars are much more likely to fail emissions tests.

A final barrier to car ownership is automobile insurance. The California vehicle code requires that all licensed drivers have liability insurance coverage. California insurance rates are among the highest in the nation and, because of redlining – the practice of setting discriminatory insurance rates based on the neighborhood of residence – low-income drivers are often subject to the highest insurance rates. Not only are premiums higher in low-income, minority neighborhoods, but these are the same areas that major insurers tend to avoid.[94]

One of the consequences of high premiums, low accessibility to major insurers and limited income is a high uninsurance rate. A recent study showed that countywide, over 30 percent of drivers are uninsured and in some areas of Los Angeles County the rate of uninsured drivers exceeds 80 percent.[95] It should not be surprising that these areas also coincide with the highest levels of welfare recipients, giving support to the finding that, statewide, over 70 percent of uninsured drivers earn less than $20,000 per year. Most of the drivers without insurance (87 percent) would be considered 'low risks' to insurance companies, but simply drive without insurance because they are unable to afford coverage. This relationship suggests that the day-to-day value of having a car exceeds the potential penalty[96] for driving without insurance.[97]

While the benefits of car ownership have been demonstrated in terms of outcomes, the costs may be prohibitive for many within the welfare-to-work population. It is also not likely that public resources will be able to accommodate the significant demand for automobile travel among the GAIN population. Car ownership and maintenance programs should be carefully evaluated, and targeted to individuals at specific stages in the transition to self-sufficiency if they are to be successful.

Car Passengers

On a typical day, roughly 24% of the adult GAIN population makes a trip as a passenger in someone else's car. This is only slightly lower than the number of trips made as passengers on public transit. As we have seen, the demand for auto passenger travel is highest in those areas with relatively low levels of existing transit service. Despite the wide use, it is quite clear that this form of transportation may not be very predictable or reliable for many of the welfare-to-work participants. There are no regularized services meant to deal with the demand for car passenger rides for this population, as opposed to the more formalized ride share programs for standard commuters.

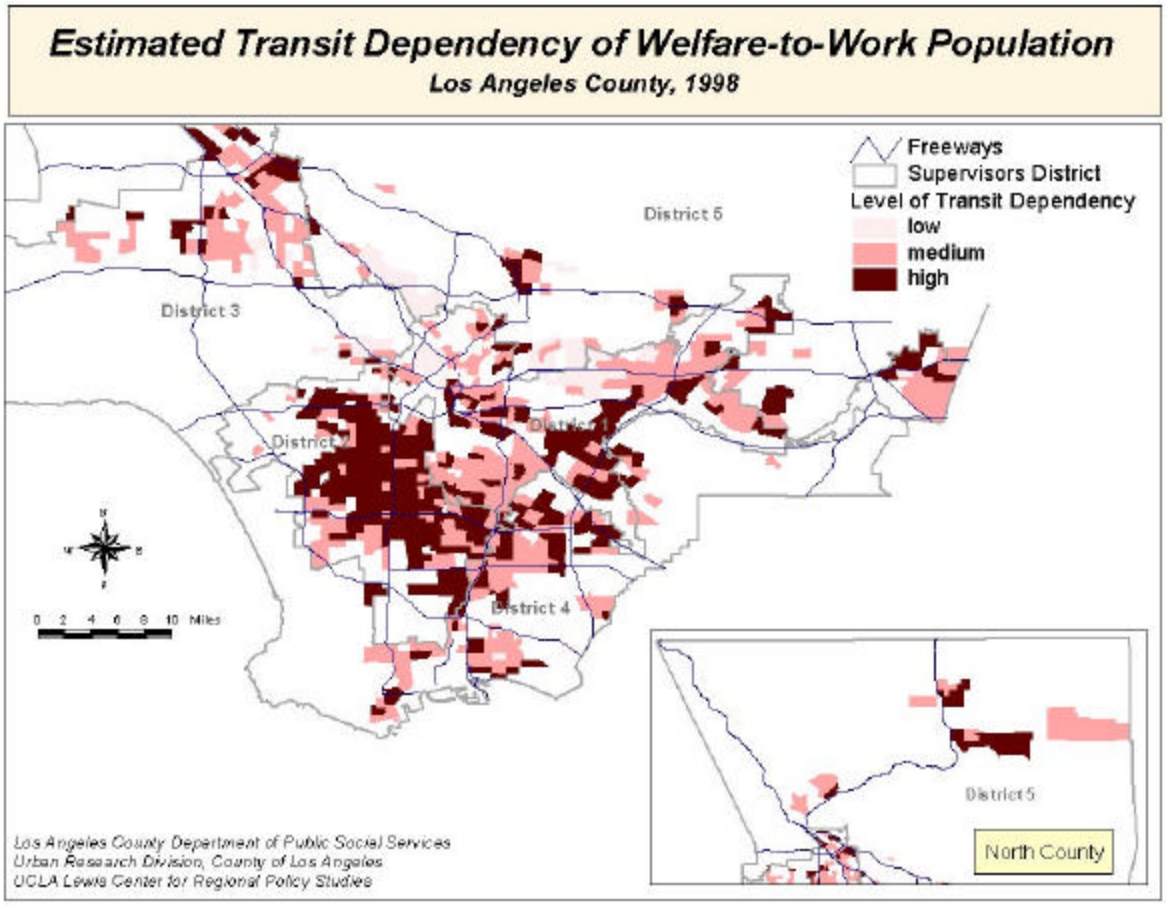
Individuals must arrange rides on a rather ad hoc and shifting basis, often from family, friends and neighbors. Those who offer rides may do so as a favor, but in many neighborhoods, a system of "informal taxis" has emerged, which is built around individuals who have a car, and who for a fee, will transport others to their destination. Because this is largely an informal system, it is difficult to assess how extensive, and how well these services are meeting the demand for car passenger rides in the communities occupied by welfare-to-work participants. On the other hand, it is clear that such informal car-pools and taxis may represent a cost-effective response to the relative lack of existing services, and should be acknowledged in the formulation of policy programs addressing the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population.

Public Transit

Although there is a perception that Los Angeles lacks public transportation, "its county transit system has the third-largest number of annual unlinked passenger trips of any system in the country, ranking behind only New York and Chicago."[98] Thirty-six public transit operators serve the region, including 34 bus providers and two rail providers.

The 1998 State of the Commute Report indicates that in Los Angeles, only about 4% of commuters use public transit as their regular travel mode for commuting to work; the figure is much higher, over 10%, for low-income people.[99] "A typical MTA rider is a person of color (Latino or African-American/black), in her twenties, with a household income under $15,000 and no car available to use in lieu of public transit."[100]

Figure 7

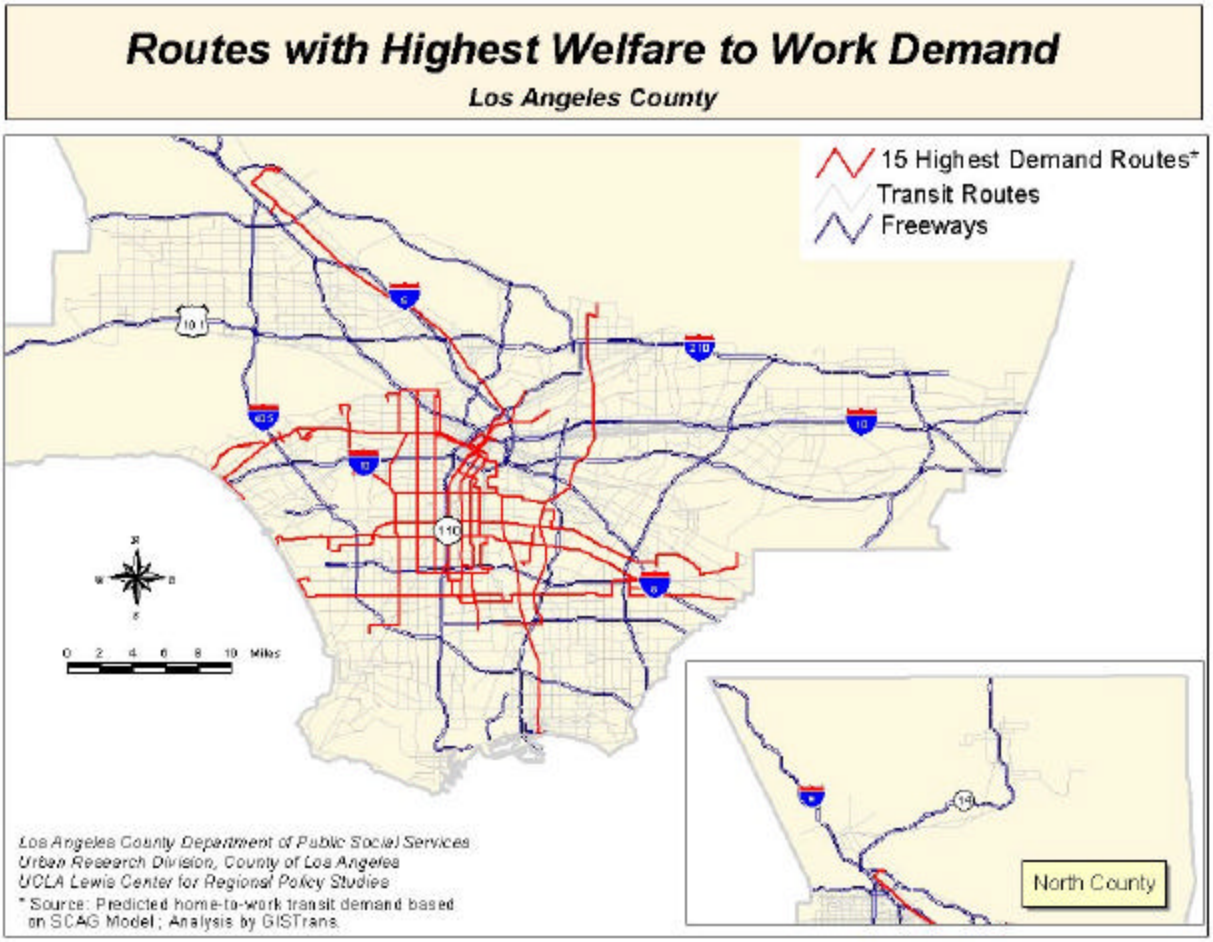


Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Based upon prior studies relating to the factors influencing auto-ownership, the distribution of the transit dependent population was estimated for Los Angeles County. Not surprisingly, there is a high level of correspondence between the location of the transit dependent, and the residential location of the welfare-to-work population, as seen in Figure 7.

As a next step, the residential locations of the welfare-to-work population together with the predicted employment locations were utilized in a regional transportation demand model. This transportation demand modeling was used to determine the likely method of travel (auto, transit or other) for home to work trips, as well as the specific public transit routes that would receive the highest levels of demand. The results of this analysis are presented in Figure 8 and discussed below.

Figure 8



In terms of ridership, the top fifteen public transit routes account for roughly 44 percent of all of the predicted home to work transit trips of the welfare-to-work population. This is consistent with other data on ridership at MTA, which has found that the top twenty routes account for just under 50 percent of the total ridership.[101]

The demand for transit services among the welfare-to-work population can now be compared to the level of available service in Los Angeles County. At an aggregate level, this analysis indicates that there are significant differences among areas within Los Angeles County. As is shown in Table 15 the Fourth and Fifth supervisorial districts have considerably less transit service than the other three districts. On the other hand, welfare participants- who use public

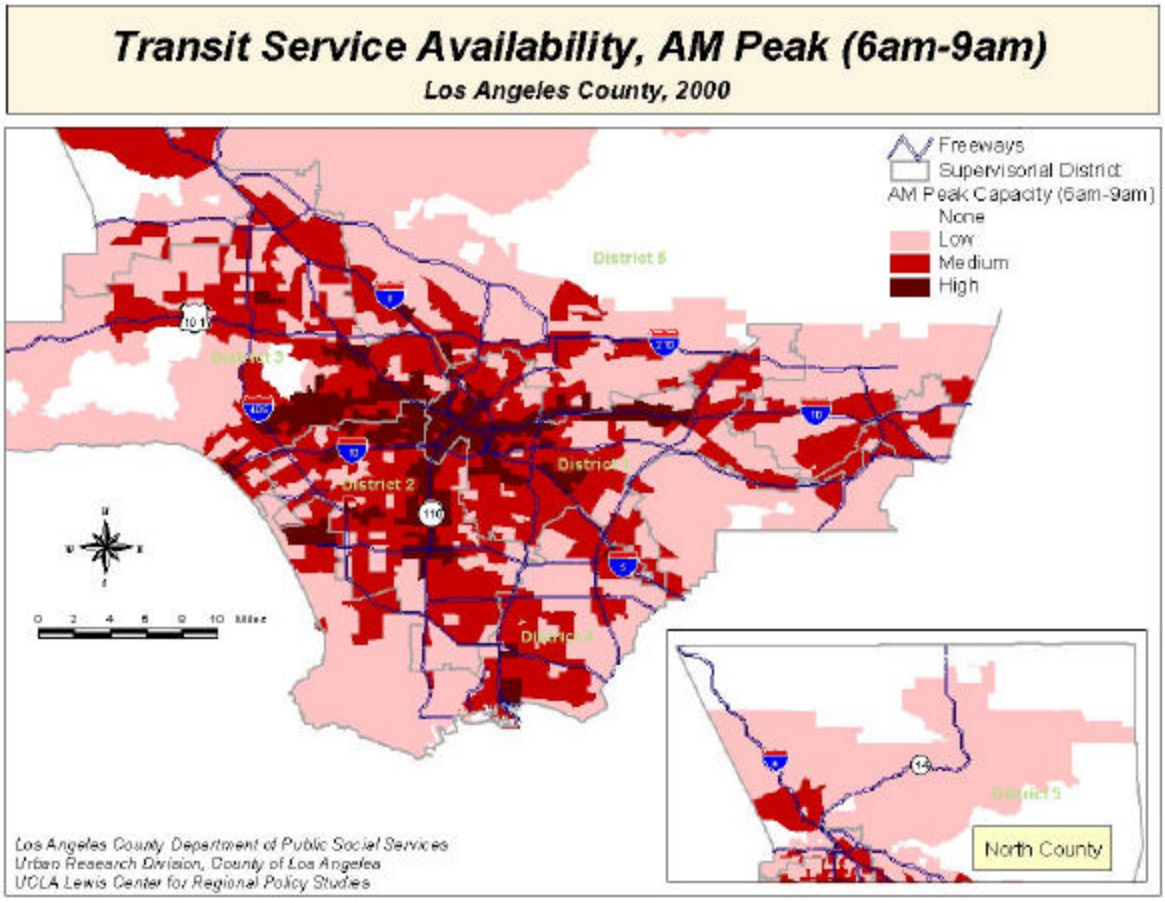
transit more than other county residents, are more concentrated in the First and Second supervisorial districts, which have better levels of transit service.

Table 15. Distribution of Transit Access by Supervisorial District, GAIN Participants, Los Angeles County, 2000

	Supervisorial District				
	First (%)	Second (%)	Third (%)	Fourth (%)	Fifth (%)
At least one bus stop within 1/4 mile*	90	95	91	85	65
Average number of stops within 1/4 mile	26	19	22	16	13
Level of Transit Service*					
Low	17	10	14	47	65
Medium	54	53	57	50	28
High	29	36	28	2	7

*Statistically significant differences, based on Chi Square statistical test for each row.
Source: CTNA Survey and SCAG data on location of transit lines and bus stops.

Figure 9



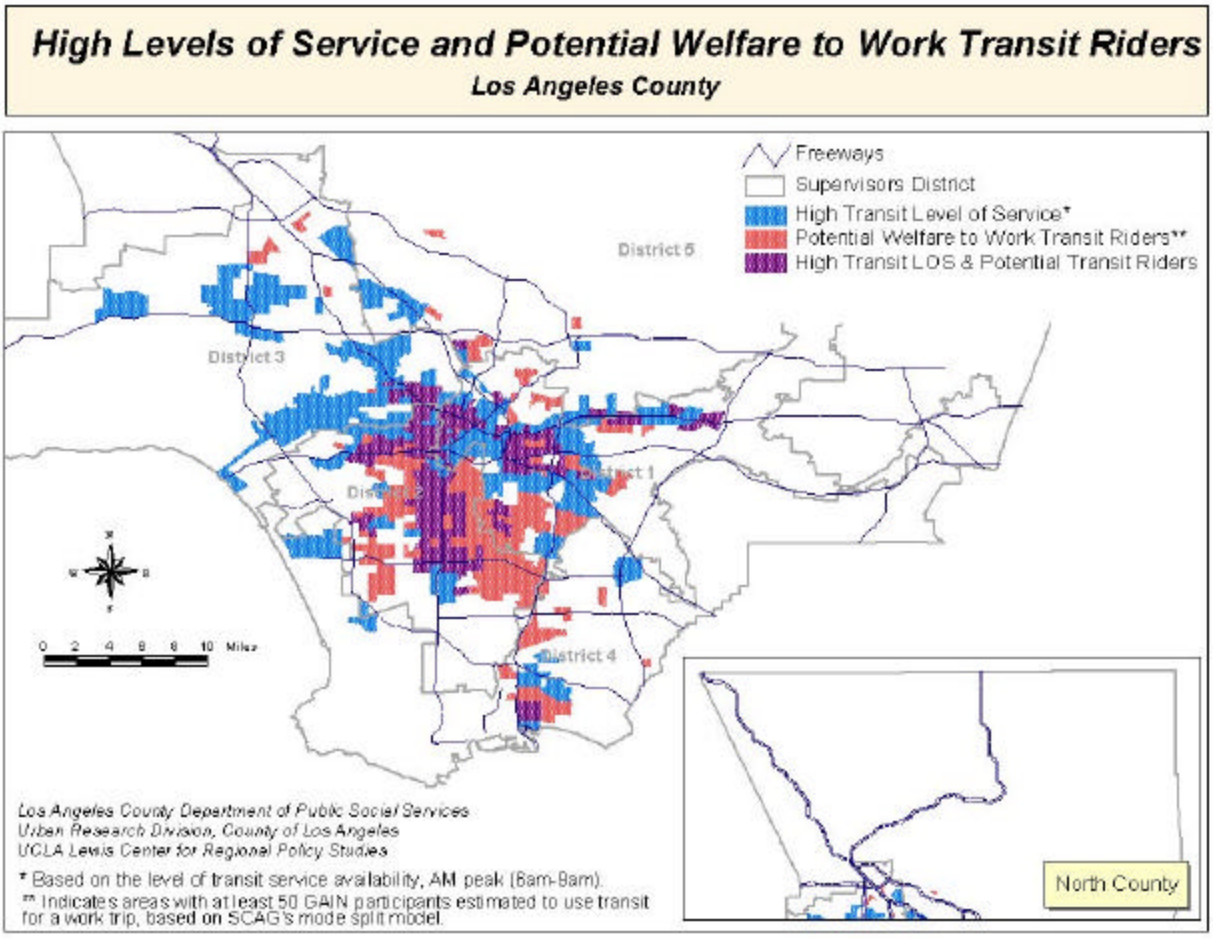
Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

To examine the level of transit service by specific area, transit schedule data was obtained for all transit carriers within Los Angeles County, and the overall number of scheduled bus runs made

between 6 AM and 9 AM was calculated. This period represents the AM peak when those working standard hours begin their morning commute. The relative level of service availability was calculated by assigning each TAZ a total number of runs in the AM peak for all routes traversing the TAZ. .

The results displayed in Figure 10 show that locations that are characterized by relatively high levels of service availability generally overlap the areas of high concentrations of welfare-to-work participants (Figure 4), as well as the areas which contain high densities of low education, majority female jobs (Figure 5). This should not be surprising, since transit availability is generally designed around many of the same demand factors as those which characterize the welfare-to-work population: low income, low rates of auto ownership, and high population and employment density.

Figure 10



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

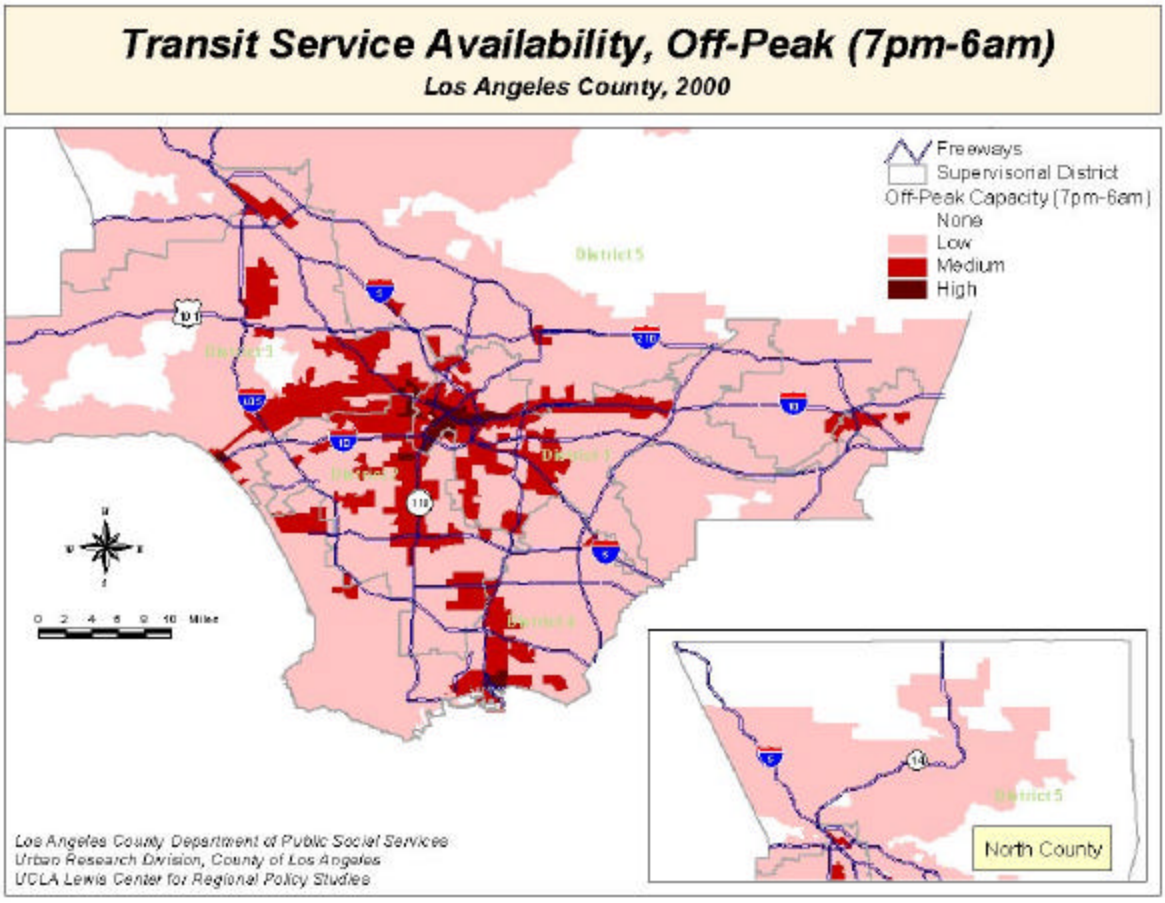
The demand for transit services generated by the welfare-to-work population was matched against the level of available service in Los Angeles County to determine if existing services accommodated the welfare-to-work population's demands. The pattern displayed in Figure 10

indicates that the current availability of transit service would generally be well positioned to accommodate a significant component of the transportation needs of those who do not own cars.

Several measures at the aggregate level support this conclusion. Specifically, roughly twenty one percent of the current GAIN participants live in areas that have high levels of service availability, with 45% falling into the medium level of service category. Only an estimated thirty-five percent of the GAIN case data reside in areas that are characterized by low levels of transit availability.

Areas in which there is a high demand for services but which lack high levels of accessibility are reflected in Figure 10. These include parts of Los Angeles City south and west of the 10 Freeway, in the Lennox and Hawthorne area, with another concentration in the cities of Lynnwood, Huntington Park, Compton, Bell and Bell Gardens, and finally in Long Beach.

Figure 11



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

The analysis to this point has focused on service accessibility for the prime or peak service period. But service accessibility varies considerably by time of day, as we see in Figure 11, which reflects service in the off-peak period. Only 31 percent of the current GAIN population lives in areas characterized by high or medium levels of transit service during off-peak hours.

This is especially critical, because, as we have seen, 57 percent of the GAIN population surveyed indicated they worked at least occasionally during weekends, and 40% of those who worked a fixed schedule did not start work in the normal workday period (6 AM to 9 AM), around which most transit service is based. For these workers, existing transit services may not be sufficient. This may reflect in the fact that 52 percent of GAIN participants who travel to work by transit report difficulty in their commute.

A final existing transit service factor analyzed was overcrowding, which was mentioned as a significant problem by at least 25% of the survey respondents who had used transit within the last six months. Relying on data supplied by the Los Angeles County MTA, the location of existing overcrowded buses (by stop) was compared to the location of the demand driven by GAIN participants traveling to work. The results indicate that currently overcrowded buses are not disproportionately concentrated in areas that have a high concentration of welfare-to-work participants. While GAIN participants may increase the demand for already overcrowded services as they transition to employment, this demand is not exclusively concentrated in the areas of existing overcrowding.

Job Accessibility

As discussed earlier in the section, the probability of employment will be affected by the proximity and accessibility of low education, female majority jobs available to the welfare-to-work population. This will vary considerably across the County, and significantly by mode of transport. The welfare-to-work population relies on different transportation options, which will affect the ease or difficulty encountered in accessing jobs throughout Los Angeles County. As a result, job accessibility was calculated for those that are transit dependent, and for those that use a vehicle.

The number of low education, female majority jobs that are accessible within a thirty-minute transit trip was calculated for each TAZ in Los Angeles County (this 30 minute transit trip corresponds to about one hour when walk time to stop and wait time are factored in). Relative job accessibility was then calculated and appears in Figure 12. The areas of greatest job accessibility by transit roughly correspond to the areas of highest concentration of the welfare-to-work population. On the other hand, recipients who live outside these central areas will probably find fewer employment opportunities within a reasonable proximity, and the transportation requirements associated with their job search is likely to be more problematic.

The number of low education, female majority jobs accessible for those who travel by car is dramatically expanded, as we see in Figure 13. This serves to dramatically highlight the relative advantage of those who own cars or have access to automobiles in their job search.

Figure 12

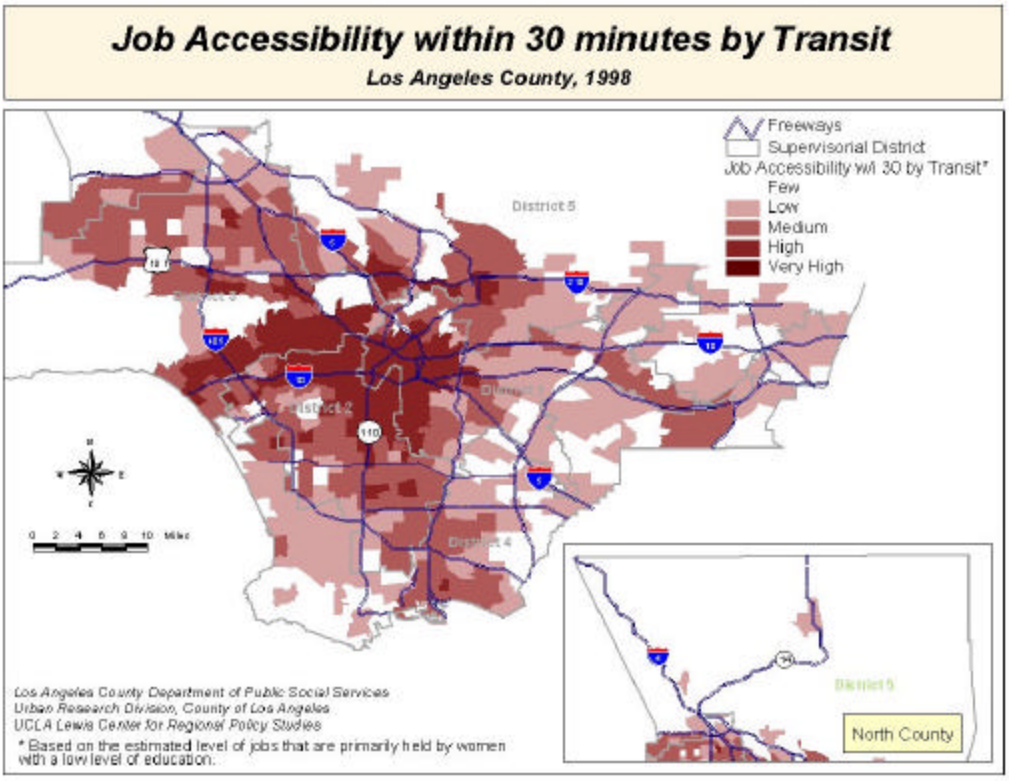
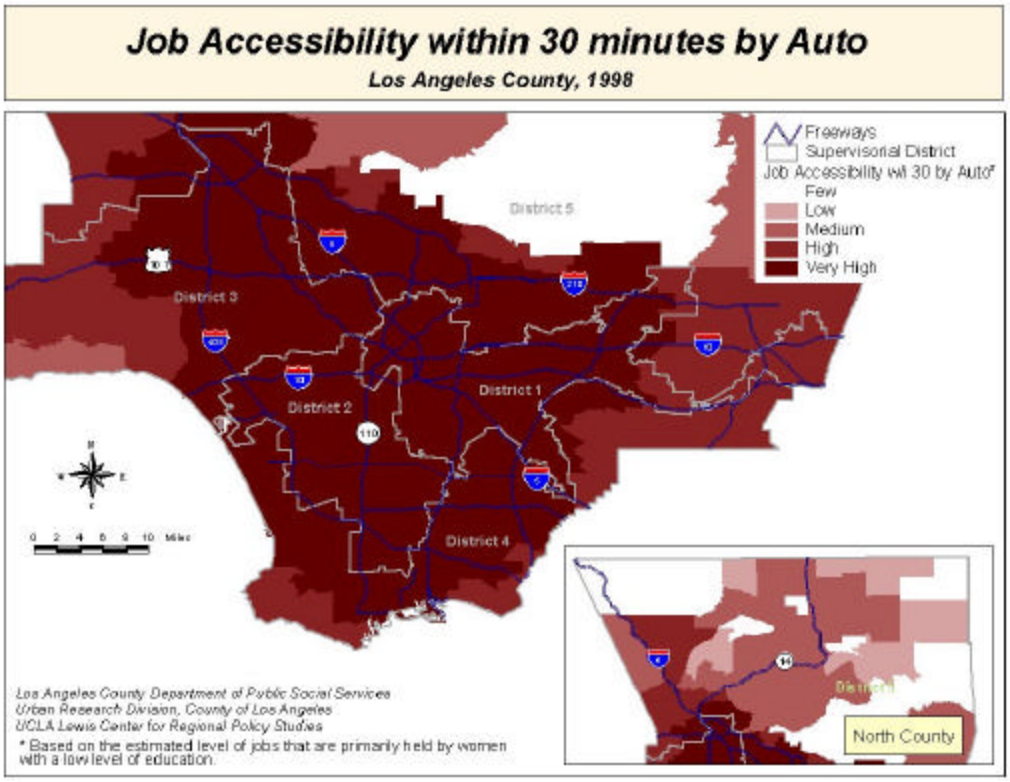


Figure 13

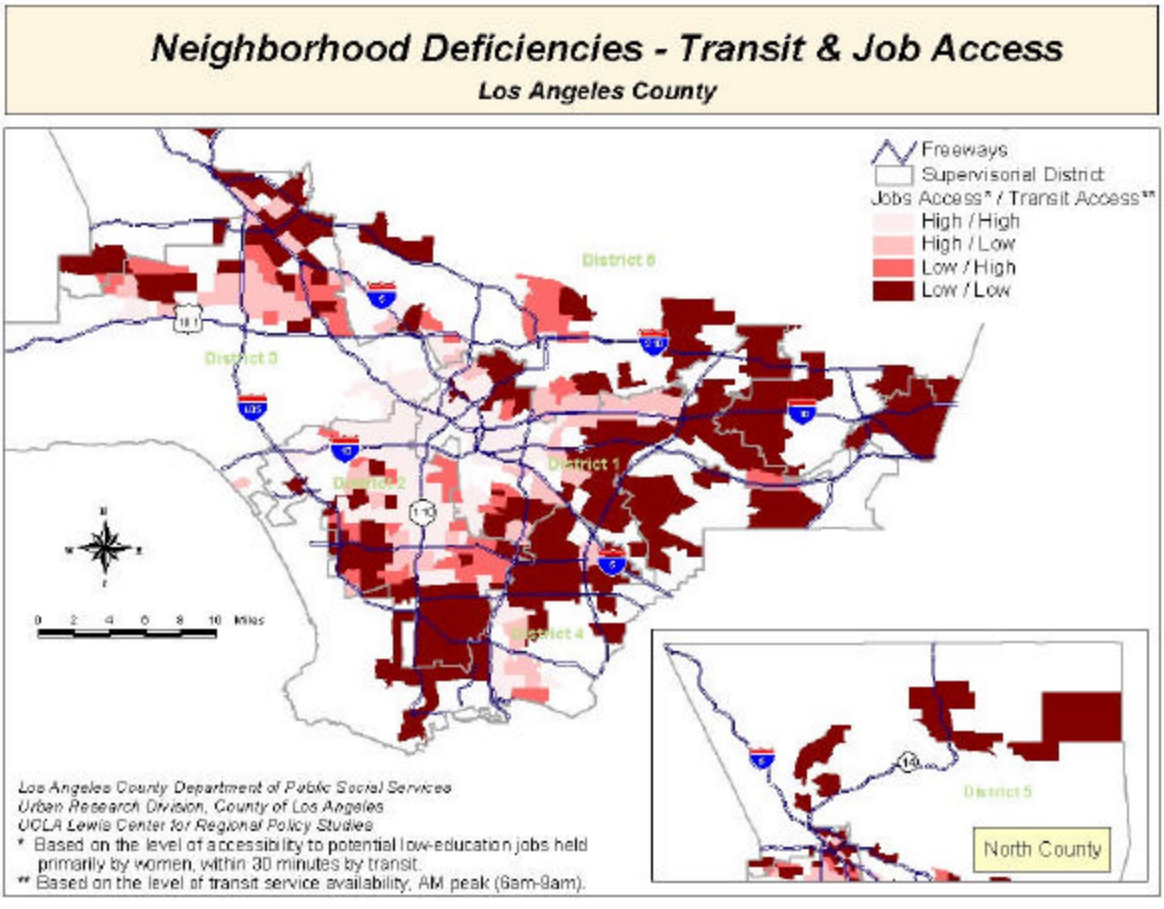


Neighborhood Deficiencies

It is now possible to begin to put several of the components of the analysis together, and begin to identify areas of deficiency. Figure 14 highlights those areas of the County characterized by low transit service availability, and low accessibility to jobs. The areas of darkest shading are those in which there is an overlap of low transit accessibility and low accessibility to jobs. It is in these areas where we would expect welfare-to-work participants to have the most difficulty in their job search and eventual journey to work. It is estimated that roughly 36% of the entire welfare-to-work caseload falls into these areas of the County.

As the map indicates, these areas are predominantly concentrated in a wide band in the southeastern section of the County, extending from Long Beach to Pomona, with large concentrations in the San Gabriel Valley, and additional areas in the northern and western San Fernando Valley. It is in precisely these areas where transit service is more limited, and access to low education, female majority jobs remains the most restricted.

Figure 14



Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 9.

Extension of existing fixed route public transit services to these areas would likely prove cost prohibitive, and as a result, addressing these neighborhood deficiencies will require more creative transportation solutions.

Carpools and Informal Taxis

As described previously, the areas of excess demand for car passenger trips are generally located in areas of low transit accessibility. It should come as no surprise then, that the areas of highest excess demand for car passenger trips also closely match the areas of greatest deficiency identified in the neighborhood analysis above.

Because of the relatively high costs of fixed route transit, carpools and vanpools might be a cost-effective way to accommodate the journey to work for some welfare-to-work participants. Carpools and vanpools have the advantage of flexibility and low cost, while achieving larger goals related to air-quality and congestion relief.

For this analysis, the distribution of the welfare-to-work population was compared to the current distribution of registered carpools and vanpools in Los Angeles County. The welfare-to-work population was divided into four equal quartiles in terms of the density of participants per square mile, which were compared to the registered car pool population similarly divided into quartiles.

The results show an almost inverse relationship between the existing welfare-to-work population and the existing densities of carpool population. The TAZs that contain the lowest density quartile of the welfare-to-work population are responsible for 43% of the established car pool population. When vanpools are similarly added in, the percentages are even more dramatic. The quartile with the lowest density of welfare-to-work participants accounts for 86% of the established carpools and vanpools.

The results are similar when the job end of the existing carpools and vanpools are examined; 70% of the existing registered carpools and vanpools end in the TAZs with the lowest density of low education, female majority jobs. While the results indicate that existing carpools and vanpools are not drawn from those areas of the highest densities of welfare-to-work participants, this should not lead us to reject car and van pools as a viable option for accommodating some GAIN participants for the home to work trip.

In those areas of the County that lack high transit accessibility, there is considerable informal "carpooling" already taking place. While more formal carpool programs would only be effective after the participant has successfully found employment, such programs could still be effective for those participants who work regular schedules, and who reside in these areas of low transit accessibility. Information and access to such official carpool matching programs should be made available to participants at the appropriate stages of their transition to full employment.

Beyond these official carpools, there is a number of informal carpooling and informal taxis which have emerged to meet the needs of the low-income population. While it is difficult to estimate the total number of such shared ride arrangements, it is clear that this currently constitutes a significant mode for many welfare-to-work participants.

Other Alternative Modes

Two other modes which may help address some of the existing transportation deficiencies include the demand responsive "specialized transportation services," which primarily service seniors and persons with disabilities, and secondly, various community and faith based organizations which operate vans and small buses to transport their members to various activities.

In the first instance, Access Services Incorporated (ASI) reports that there are 191 contracted service providers operating throughout Los Angeles County, who transported 1.2 million passengers in the latest year for which data is available, 1998.[102] While the greatest majority of these passengers are comprised of the elderly and disabled, with adequate funding, there is no reason such services could not be extended to include some GAIN participants at various points in their transition to employment. In this regard, the Los Angeles County's MTA is currently proposing the use of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant funds to extend such demand responsive services to current welfare-to-work recipients for an emergency ride home program, and other crisis-related unanticipated transportation needs.[103]

The main advantage of such demand responsive service is that it is highly flexible, and can be operated to transport someone from origin to destination, but also from origin to main transit feeder location, extending the range of existing fixed route public transit. The primary disadvantage is the cost, with the average cost per passenger at roughly 26 dollars.

The other alternate mode that shows some promise are the vans and small buses operated by various community and faith based organizations throughout Los Angeles County. As a part of this study, a survey was conducted of twenty-seven such organizations, to assess their willingness and availability to transport welfare-to-work clients.[104] The survey found that 100% would be willing to use their vans for such purposes (some were already doing so), with more than 60% who were willing to do so full time. In addition, 93% did not require that the participant be a member of their faith or community, opening potential service to all. All of the respondents were willing to transport riders not only to and from job interviews, but also to child care, and other required services, although some indicated a preference to limiting such service to areas that they already cover (in closer proximity to their primary locations).

Finally, there was a strong interest in operating such a van if the County provided it. This opens the possibility of contracting with such community-based organizations to provide demand responsive service in their primary service areas to meet some of the transportation demand of the welfare-to-work population.

These more flexible services could be drawn upon for those areas of the county in which existing transit service is low, and also at specific phases of the transition to work process, specifically at the job search stage, when the transportation needs are the greatest.

Section 7. Conclusion

This report represents the findings of the CalWORKs Transportation Needs Assessment (CTNA) and provides information about the transportation behavior and needs of welfare-to-work participants in Los Angeles County. The report also matches the needs of the welfare-to-work population to available transportation resources in order to identify deficiencies that may act as barriers hindering the transition from welfare to work. These deficiencies are presented below.

Main Transportation Deficiencies

The needs assessment produced a voluminous amount of data regarding the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population. We have tried to group the unmet needs into major categories that facilitate a comprehensive view of the main transportation barriers faced by welfare participants. Although in reality it is not possible to separate one deficiency from another because they are interrelated and overlapping, for the purposes of this analysis we have identified four major types of deficiencies:

1. Spatial or neighborhood deficiencies
2. Mode of transportation deficiencies
3. Family-related trip deficiencies
4. Welfare-to-work stage deficiencies

Spatial or Neighborhood Deficiencies

Spatial or neighborhood deficiencies are those which limit participants' chances of securing employment based upon the accessibility characteristics of their neighborhoods. These deficiencies are identified by looking at where the current welfare-to-work population lives, where they are likely to work, and the services available to meet those needs.

Our findings indicate that the location of potential employment sites does not usually match the residential locations of welfare participants;[105] however, as we have seen, the average home to work distance for those GAIN participants who work is about 7 miles. While GAIN participants will need to travel outside of their proximate neighborhoods for employment, there is generally high job accessibility within relatively short commute distances by car, and within a one-hour transit trip.

For those workers who work in "off peak" hours, travel by transit is likely to be more difficult, and this may impact a significant portion of the overall welfare-to-work population. In addition, because transit service is uneven in Los Angeles County, some participants will live in areas which may be characterized by low levels of transit service.

Pulling these components together, our analysis reveals that some areas of the county have both low transit service and low accessibility to potential jobs for welfare participants. Participants living in these areas, approximately 36% of the total welfare-to-work population, have

considerably greater barriers to employment based solely on where they live. Addressing these neighborhood deficiencies will require more creative transportation solutions, due to the high costs of extending fixed route transit these areas.

Modal Deficiencies

Modal deficiencies occur when the supply of different modes of transportation is exceeded by demand. Three distinct groups among the GAIN population were used to identify modes of transportation throughout this report: those who use cars, those who attempt to secure auto passenger trips, and those who take existing public transit. Each of these groups has its own set of problems and potential barriers, as previously discussed.

Among the welfare-to-work population, car owners are a relatively privileged subgroup, experiencing fewer difficulties transitioning from welfare to work and reporting fewer transportation barriers. About 55 percent of GAIN participants live in households with at least one vehicle, and about half of the welfare-to-work population drives a car to work. Car ownership, as well as car access, are correlated with employment status and increase likelihood of employment. However, car ownership is expensive and is not without its problems. Our findings reveal that most of the cars owned by welfare participants are 10 years or older, and a considerable amount are not covered by insurance. Additionally, over half of them had at least one mechanical failure in the last three months, and a quarter had more than three mechanical problems.

Aside from autos providing transportation for drivers, they provide many welfare-to-work participants a means of travel as passengers. Participants may rely on an informal system that offers rides for a fee, or simply get rides from family and friends, which may or may not be compensated. Thirty-five percent of all trips by non-auto owners are as car passengers and on a typical day, about a quarter of adult GAIN participants make at least one trip by riding in another's car. The overall number of auto passenger trips is only slightly lower than the number of trips made on public transit. These auto passengers, particularly those who do not rely on other modes, are more likely to reside in areas with relatively low transit service. Consequently, the demand for car passenger trips is highest in areas with low levels of transit service.

Welfare-to-work participants who are car passengers often face the same problems that car owners face. Cars may be unreliable and have mechanical failures, and relying on others for rides is often a relatively unstable situation. As a result of these factors, participants engage in a constant set of complex, often time-consuming arrangement and negotiations to find transportation.

Finally, there is an important group of welfare participants who rely on public transit. About a quarter of employed participants use transit to travel to work, and about 18 percent of daily trips are on transit. Transit usage is much higher among this population than it is among the average working age adult population, who make only about 3 percent of their trips on public transit. Two-fifths of survey respondents found public transit to be a workable mode; however, 60 percent of job seekers and 52 percent of those employed reported difficulties using public transit.

Relative to those who travel by car, transit users were twice as likely to say their commutes were difficult, and that transportation problems made it hard to find or keep a job.

The most commonly reported problems reported by the group of welfare participants who rely on public transit include: overcrowding, buses that do not stop, unfamiliarity with the transit routes, stress of traveling with children, and how time consuming trips are. For the majority of transit riders, more frequent bus service is the preferred choice for improvement and cost was a lower consideration than other improvements, such as frequency of service, being on time, and closer bus stops.

Family-related Trip Deficiencies

Welfare-to-work participants have difficulty balancing work-related travel with family obligations. For welfare-to-work participants, a typical day is not only work-centered, but family-centered as well. Transportation is not only used to get to and from work, but to address other family issues such as childcare, health care, shopping, and errands. As with most working age adults, the majority of trips made by welfare participants are to destinations other than work, and many involve trips to satisfy family needs. In this study, we focused on child and health care related travel, because of their importance in achieving self-sufficiency. In this section, we examine the main transportation barriers faced by participants in relation to meeting childcare and health care needs.

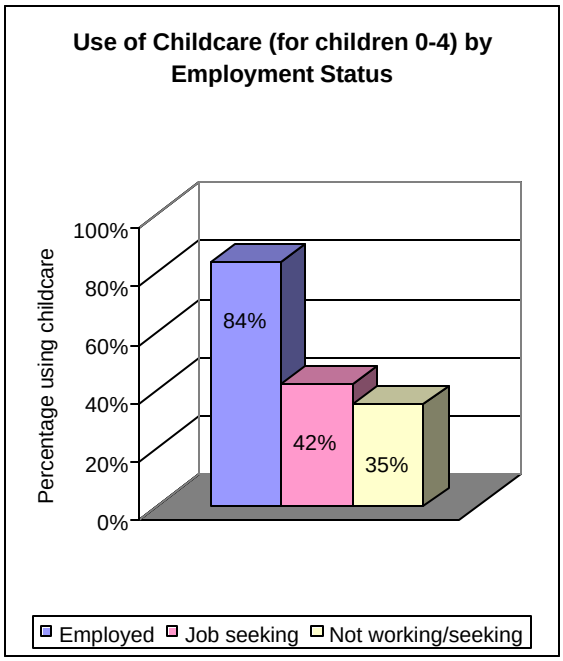
Job search, and especially employment, increases participants' need for and use of childcare for preschool children (see Figure 15). The majority (84 percent) of employed participants use childcare for their children aged 4 or younger, compared to only 42 percent of job seekers and 35 percent of those not working or searching. Overall, over half of participants use some form of childcare for their preschoolers (58 percent). The most common type of childcare involves relatives or friends caring for the children, usually license-exempt providers. Although we anticipate that participants choose this form of childcare for a variety of reasons, such as trusting that family or friends will adequately care for their children, availability of licensed childcare slots is also an issue. Most welfare-to-work participants live in areas with a very low number of licensed childcare slots per child. Almost 40 percent of participants with children aged 4 or younger live in areas with less than 15 slots per 100 preschool children. The use of licensed care increases in areas where the availability is greater.

Among all families who use childcare, about one-fifth have their children cared for in their own homes and therefore do not need transportation to access childcare services. The remaining 81 percent require some means of transportation. Usually, the distance to childcare is short and in many cases the provider is within walking distance of the participant's home. The median distance to licensed care is 1.7 miles, compared to 0.1 miles for license-exempt care (see Figure 16).[106] This indicates that for those using license-exempt care, transportation does not seem to be a major issue in reaching childcare. However, those using licensed care must engage in significantly longer trips for childcare.

Despite distance to childcare usually not being very long, travel to childcare is difficult for some participants, especially for those in the job-search phase and those relying on public transit. Half

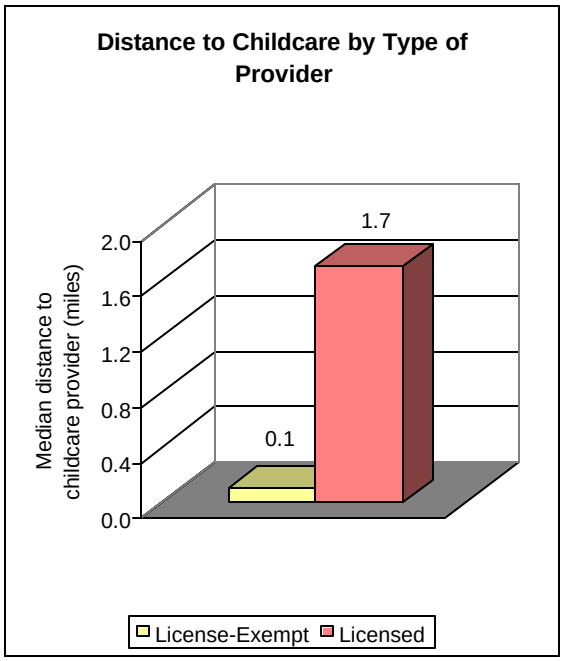
of participants seeking work consider travel to childcare to be difficult, as do half of those who use public transit to get to childcare.

Figure 15



Source: CTNA, 2000.

Figure 16



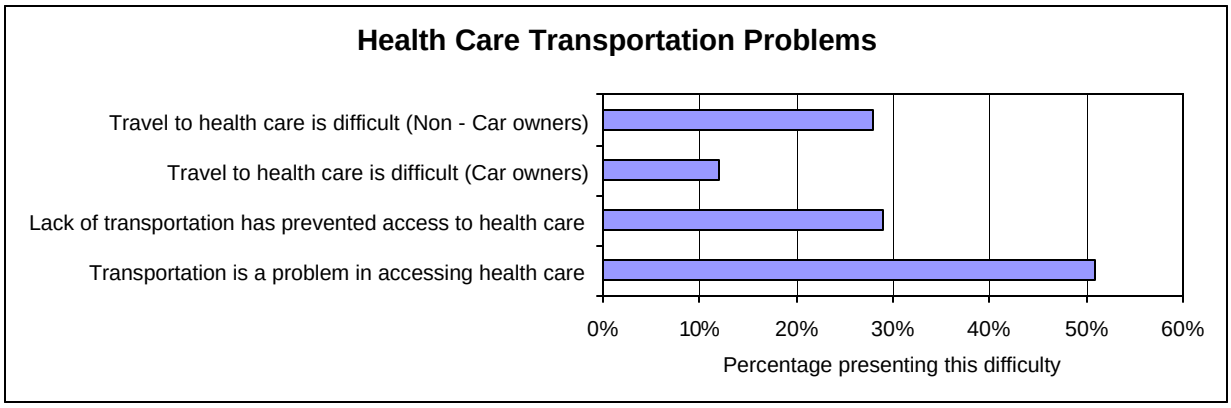
Source: CTNA, 2000.

Welfare-to-work participants with school-aged children have different needs. Participants' trips for job search and work often increase the amount of time these children are left unsupervised. Most of the welfare-to-work populations' school-aged children go home after school, with very few participating in after-school activities. As a result, participants express concern and need for childcare services and after school activities for school-aged children and teenagers.

In addition to childcare being a crucial part in moving participants to self-sufficiency, travel to health care facilities is also an important concern. A majority of participants, 72 percent, have visited health care facilities during the past 6 months either for a personal visit or to take a family member who depends upon them for transportation. For approximately half of the GAIN population, transportation is a problem in access to health care, and almost one-third reported that lack of transportation has prevented them from access to health care in the past (see Figure 17).

Perceived difficulty of travel to health care is greater among those who do not own cars relative to car owners. Additionally, when participants can plan their health related trips in advance, they generally do not view transportation as major problem. However, participants express great concern in dealing with children's emergencies that may arise while they are at work or job searching, especially when they do not have access to a reliable car.

Figure 17



Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.

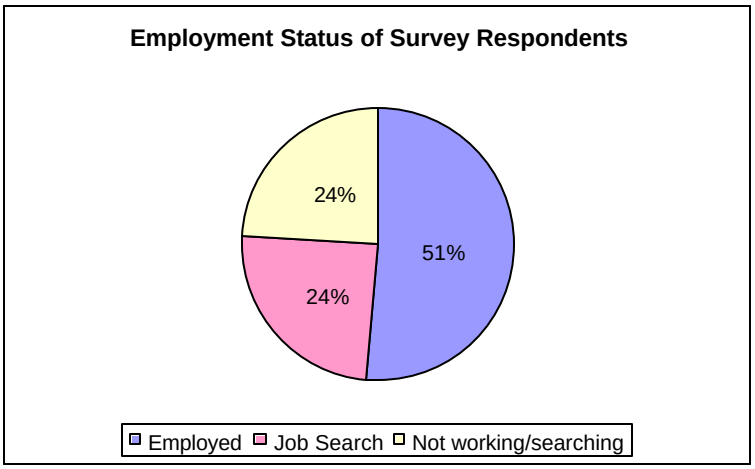
The focus group sessions provided some additional information regarding barriers and preferences related to transportation and healthcare access. The sessions indicated that participants appreciate the shuttle services offered by some health care centers and that the change from the traditional Medi-Cal system to managed care programs have imposed additional burdens. Some participants complained that with the change from the previous system to the new one, they were spending much time traveling to their providers. The new system does allow for participants to chose their providers and chose ones close to home, but because many participants do not know how to navigate the complicated HMO system on their own, they are often assigned to a provider that may not be in close proximity. A more transportation-conscious marketing of health care providers, as well as providing participants with information and helping them choose providers close to home, could help solve these problems.

Deficiencies Related to Stages in the Welfare-to-Work Process

The welfare-to-work stage deficiencies describe those transportation difficulties and barriers that participants face in relation to their current stage in the process of moving from welfare to work, as discussed in Section 3. For purposes of our analysis, we identified three main stages in the welfare-to-work transition, based on employment status: (1) not working or seeking work, (2) job search, and (3) employment. At the time of the survey, half of GAIN participants reported that they were employed and a quarter that they were actively looking for a job; the remaining quarter were not working or seeking work (see Figure 18).[107]

Welfare-to-work participants face the greatest transportation difficulties during the job-search stage. Job seekers make more trips per day, travel more during peak hours, and engage in more trip chains (combining travel to many destinations into one trip) than those employed or those who are not working or seeking work as shown by the figures below (see Figure 19 and Figure 20). Additionally, they are less likely to have access to a car than those who are working. Their travel patterns and schedules are less predictable, and change daily as they travel to different job interviews or seek applications in areas that may be unfamiliar to them.

Figure 18



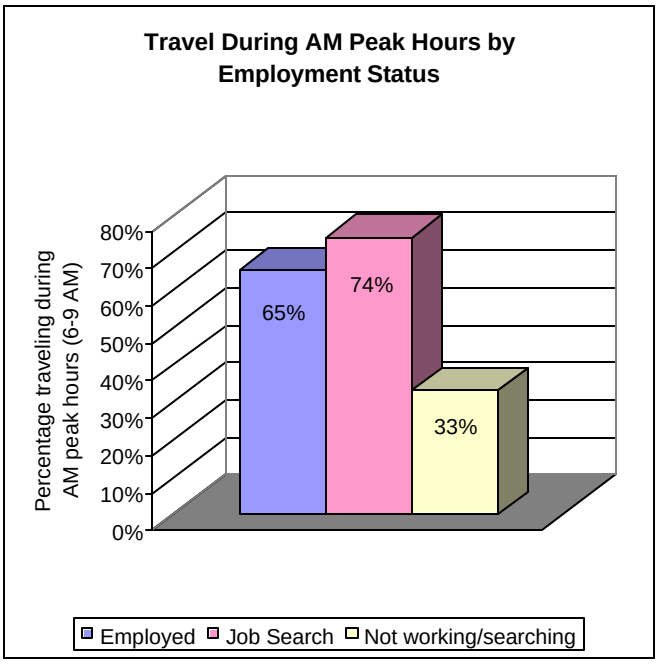
Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.

Most unemployed, non-exempt GAIN participants are required to enroll in Job Club, a three-week activity designed to help participants find full or part time employment. Job Club includes participation in activities such as a job-finding skills workshop, supervised job search and job interviews. The requirements of Job Club sometimes impose travel demands on participants that are difficult to meet even with adequate transportation. Consistently, participants express that getting to and from job interviews, job applications, Job Club, and other related activities is a complicated task, especially on public transportation. Three-fifths of those using transit and almost one-third of those using cars find travel for job search to be difficult.

Once a participant has found employment, travel tends to become less complex. The commute to work is usually perceived as relatively easy for those who use cars, but half of those relying on transit consider it to be difficult, as show by Figure 21, and participants usually perceive commuting to work on public transit as a burden.

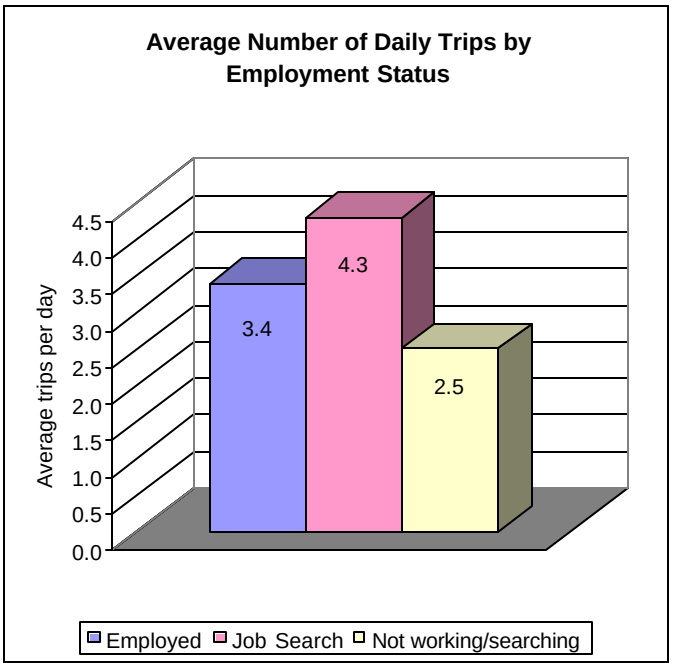
The rates of car ownership and usage are higher among employed participants than among the other two groups; having access to a car seems to facilitate finding and securing jobs, but it is also possible that employment allows participants to purchase cars.

Figure 19



Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.

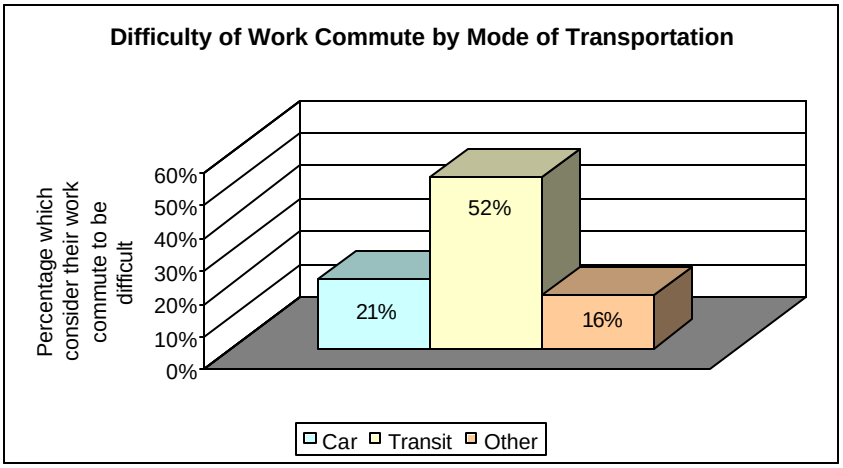
Figure 20



Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.

Most welfare-to-work participants find jobs at an average of 7 miles[108] from home, a distance that is lower than the average one-way commute for workers in the country (12-13 miles).[109] Despite the relatively short distance, it may take a long time on public transit, especially if the person must make one or more transfers. Additionally, many participants work weekends (57 percent) and non-standard hours (40 percent). These schedules pose difficulties, especially for those relying on public transit, because the level of transit service during off peak hours is considerably lower and safety concerns become more of an issue.

Figure 21



Source: CTNA Survey, 2000.

Although DPSS provides some assistance for transportation costs for welfare-to-work activities (bus passes, mileage reimbursement, cash for fare, etc.), only about one-tenth of participants report having received these payments.

As part of this study, we examined expected transportation costs, given the current and future travel patterns identified. These were broken down into the same three categories of travel: car drivers, car passengers, and those who travel by bus. Among those who drive, the average predicted distance county-wide is 9.7 miles (one way), which increases to 12 miles for those who share a ride.[110]

Table 16. Market Rate by Mode of Travel, Los Angeles County, 2000

Mode of Travel	% of Trips	Average Distance	Unit Cost x 2	Market Rate
Auto Driver	53%	9.7	$0.325	$6.30
Auto Passenger	18%	12.0	$0.325	$7.80 / 2 = $3.90
Transit Rider	29%	10.7		$3.20

Source: CTNA, 2000. See Appendix 11.

We also looked at the differences in travel length between those who reside in the North County versus those in the South County, and found that the travel distance is roughly the same for those who drive, but increases to 18.6 miles for those who share a ride. Applying standard reimbursement formulas of 32.5 cents a mile, this would translate to an average travel cost of $6.30 (round trip) daily for those who drive alone, $3.90 for those who share a ride in the South County (which is one half of the full cost of $7.80), and $6.05 for those who share a ride in the North County.

Turning to the predicted transit costs for the welfare-to-work population as a whole, the average trip time was 41 minutes from the arrival of the bus, with an average of one transfer, and an average fare of $3.20 round trip. The methodology for these calculations can be found in Appendix 11.

While we urge caution in the use of these estimates, it does seem clear that current assistance and reimbursement rates offered by DPSS may in some cases not cover the full costs of transportation among participants. This point was frequently made by focus group participants, who felt that current transportation payments sometimes did not cover the added expenses associated with job search and employment.

Further, additional transportation assistance seems to be necessary to help participants, especially during the job search phase when participants face the greatest transportation difficulties, and where innovative programs can possibly yield very positive results. Creative programs, such as vans that drive groups of job seekers to potential employment sites, may facilitate the process and help participants find and secure employment.

Study Summary and Policy Suggestions

The travel behaviors of the GAIN population are complex, and driven by a variety of factors: where they live, their employment status, what stage of the welfare-to-work process they find themselves in, and their available resources. This report, using the findings of the CalWORKs Transportation Needs Assessment (CTNA), has identified a series of transportation deficiencies that are centered around neighborhood characteristics, method of travel selected, types of family-related trips which are required, and transportation needs which are generated by the requirements of the system and process itself.

With this research we have been able to identify that a significant number of GAIN participants are disadvantaged by where they live relative to existing transportation services and the location of potential jobs. Since extending transit services may not be economically feasible in these areas, more creative programs may need to be devised to address these spatial deficiencies. For example, non-fixed route transportation, carpools and vanpools may help in these areas. Coordination with neighboring counties is also important when identifying areas with potential entry-level jobs and transit services.

As is expected in a city like Los Angeles, there is an overwhelming preference for travel by car among GAIN participants. Those who travel by private vehicle, either as a driver or passenger, report having a considerably easier time in all stages of the welfare-to-work process and with other supportive trips. Car ownership is positively correlated with employment status, those with cars are much more likely to be employed.

Collected data and analysis also shows there was considerable use of auto passenger trips among participants without consistent access to an automobile. Auto passengers generally resided in areas of low transit service, and in this respect, riding as passengers in private vehicles serves as a surrogate for public transit. Many participants rely on an informal system that offers rides for a fee, a practice that should be acknowledged in the design of transportation programs to serve the welfare population.

Participants who rely on public transit report a considerably more difficult time while job searching and commuting to work. Some of the most common transit problems identified are infrequent service and waiting for buses which are not on schedule, unfamiliarity with transit routes, how time consuming the trips are, overcrowding, difficulty in using transit with children and safety concerns.

Entry into the labor force increases the need for and use of childcare. The most common form of childcare used by participants involved friends and family taking care of the children. Using this type of care represented short travel distances to childcare. Access to health care can also be a problem without adequate transportation, especially in emergencies.

Welfare-to-work participants face the greatest number of transportation difficulties while seeking work. Requirements of the welfare-to-work program generate new transportation needs for participants that are not met by the services provided. Job search is likely to be difficult, not only because of the greater transportation needs, but because of a whole complex of demands made upon participants. Transportation assistance will likely have the greatest impact at this

stage of the process. Since the welfare-to-work program imposes programmatic requirements as well as additional travel, and participants must cope with a lack of transportation, a dual approach may be advisable. The GAIN program can adopt a more 'transportation-conscious' plan and perform a re-evaluation of programmatic elements, while transportation authorities design programs that supply transportation where it is currently unavailable.

Research described within this report has identified a number of problems and concerns expressed by welfare participants struggling to find or keep jobs. These problems and concerns suggest that a series of questions should be asked about any proposed mode of transportation. These questions and considerations are listed below:

- When is it available? Can the participant count on using it every day? Can the participant count on using it at all times of day, during non-peak hours? Limited availability, such as frequent mechanical failure in cars, and buses that do not run every day or only at specific hours, is a concern for all travelers, especially for those who rely on public transit and work non-traditional hours.

- How consistent is it? Can the participant count on trips taking roughly the same amount of time each day? For those who are employed, arriving on time to work is likely to be a major concern. If buses are not reliable in their schedules, or if buses are often full, public transit-reliant recipients may have to choose between allowing a large amount of extra time in their daily schedules or else risk being late. This is also likely to be a concern with carpools and vanpools, where the behavior of others might cause the shared vehicle to be late.

- How long does it take to reach a specific destination? Time spent traveling is time not available for other activities, such as study, job search, or child supervision. Travel time is likely to be a concern whenever jobs or services are not available near residences. Because public transit is almost always significantly slower than auto travel, this is a special problem for those who rely on public transit, particularly job seekers.

- Is information available for the planning of trips? How does a recipient find out how to get from here to there? Are there local transit practices (e.g., rules regarding the use of bus transfers) that will not be clear to job-seekers unfamiliar with a particular area? Road maps are widely available to drivers, but there is little easily accessible information for the public transit user. Information available from any specific transit agency is likely to be limited to only that agency and will not include information from other agencies. How is information available? For example, kiosks in welfare offices are unlikely to be useful during job search, since searches are not conducted out of the welfare office. A well-staffed phone service available from anywhere would likely be much more helpful.

- How complicated is it to negotiate actual travel? Are there problems of coordination that complicate the planning of trips? Carpooling and vanpooling require coordination and the exercise of responsibility. They also require the maintenance of positive social relations among pool members. Public transit, on the other hand, can impose a need for complicated planning when trying to "match" different schedules and transfers. It also requires people to interact with others using the same bus and to respect certain behavioral rules.

- Is it safe? This is mainly a concern with regard to mass transit, and especially applies at night. Many feel that it is not safe to walk to and stand at bus stops at night, for instance. Safety is also a legitimate concern for those whose trips are by walking alone, and those who travel in poorly maintained autos.

- Is it child-friendly? Since most welfare families are single women with children, traveling with kids is part of these families' routines. Although it is difficult to travel with children on a bus, it is not impossible. Vanpools, however, might not allow children at all.

- How much physical effort does it take? The nearest bus stop might be half a mile or more away from home and not all participants are physically well and without disabilities.

- How much does it cost? Though often left unmentioned by participants, cost is a key issue. Given their preference for auto travel, it seems likely that most participants, who do not have and use cars, do not have them because they cannot afford to purchase or maintain them. Bus fare can also be a concern, especially during the period of job search when participants or DPSS may not accurately anticipate the cost of a particular set of trips.

The above policy suggestions, in coordination with the data compiled by the needs assessment and the analysis provided by this report, will assist in the design of policies that address the identified transportation deficiencies. This next step should also involve a critical analysis of transportation programs for welfare participants already implemented around the country, which may help identify solutions that can be followed and implemented in Los Angeles County. An overview of programs implemented in different areas of the U.S. (see Appendix 12) has been included with this report. Although very little has been done to evaluate how effective/extensive the programs are, drawing upon past experience may help with the current development of new programs.

Endnotes

[1] Nightingale, Demetra Smith. *Transportation Issues in Welfare Reform: Background Information*. Washington DC: The Urban Institute, December 1997. [INTERNET, WWW] http://www.urbaninstitute.org/welfare/transport_issues.html [Accessed 04/20/2000], p. 3-4.

[2] Most CalWORKs participants in Los Angeles County are required to participate in the GAIN (Greater Avenue for Independence) program. GAIN is the employment/training component of welfare-to-work in Los Angeles, which was implemented prior to the initiation of welfare reform. Once a relatively small, optional program, GAIN is now the primary programmatic vehicle for employment, training and placement, and is a requirement for nearly all non-exempt CalWORKs participants. The program requires welfare recipients to participate in various welfare-to-work activities aimed at helping them secure employment.

[3] Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. *L.A. GAIN: Greater Avenues for Independence*. [Internet, WWW] http://dpss.co.la.ca.us/gain/default_gain.cfm [Accessed May 1, 2000].

[4] See http://dpss.co.la.ca.us/gain/exemptions.cfm for situations for which exemptions apply. Some of the most common exemptions include persons under 16 or over 60, pregnant women, disabled persons, youth aged 16-18 who are full-time students, and persons providing care for an ill family member or a child under age one.

[5] Job search may not be a requirement if the person is exempted from GAIN after the appraisal, is already employed or participating in a vocational education/training program that meets GAIN requirements, or declares the need for immediate counseling for domestic violence, mental health or substance abuse.

[6] Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) is the contractor that conducts Job Club for DPSS.

[7] L.A. GAIN Program Handbook, County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Social Services, M/L#1, Issue #1, Issued 2-26-99, section 712.1. Also see http://dpss.co.la.ca.us/gain/jss.cfm.

[8] This data was provided by Mary Williams, LACOE Coordinator for GAIN Job Services; email message to one of the authors, August 24, 2000.

[9] This data was provided by Mary Williams, LACOE Coordinator for GAIN Job Services, with authorization from DPSS. Mary Williams, email message to Jose Salgado, forwarded to one of the authors, May 23, 2000.

[10] Mental health care and substance abuse service facilities in contract with DPSS are mapped in Figure 1, Appendix 4. Domestic violence services, however, are not mapped due to confidentiality and security reasons; the locations of some shelters and offices are public, but others are only disclosed to the person in need.

[11] United States General Accounting Office. *Welfare Reform: Transportation's Role in Moving From Welfare to Work*. Report to the Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives. GAO/RCED-98-161. Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, May, 1998, p. 1.

[12] Evelyn Blumenberg, Paul Ong and Andrew Mondschein. Uneven Access to Opportunities: Welfare Recipients, Jobs and Employment Support Services in Los Angeles. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., November 6, 1999.

[13] Neil Bania, Claudia Coulton and Laura Leete. *Welfare Reform and Access to Job Opportunities in the Cleveland Metropolitan Area*. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., November 6, 1999.

[14] Michael Rich. *Access to Opportunities: The Welfare-to-Work Challenge in Metropolitan Atlanta*. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., November 6, 1999.

[15] Margaret Pugh. *Barriers to Work: The Spatial Divide Between Jobs and Welfare Recipients in Metropolitan Area*. Discussion Paper. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Center for Urban and Metropolitan Policy, 1998. [Internet, WWW] http://www.brook.edu/es/urban/mismatch.pdf [Accessed 05/05/2000].

[16] Evelyn Blumenberg and Paul Ong. "The Transportation-Welfare Nexus: Getting Welfare Recipients to Work." In Daniel Mitchell and Patricia Nomura, Eds. *California Policy Options, 1999*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research and UCLA Anderson Forecast, 1999.

[17] Hilary Williamson Hoynes. *Local Labor Market Spells: So Demand Conditions Matter?* Unpublished manuscript, Department of Economics, University of California, Berkeley, 1996.

[18] Paul Ong. "Work and Car Ownership Among Welfare Recipients." *Social Work Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 255-262, December 1996.

[19] Robert Cervero, Onesimo Sandoval and John Landis. *The Value of Transportation in Stimulating Welfare-to-Work Transitions: Evidence from San Francisco*. Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, July, 1999.
[20] Steven Raphael and Lorien Rice. *The Effect of Car Ownership on the Employment Rates of Welfare Recipients and Low Skilled Women: Evidence from Quasi-Experiments*. Paper presented at The Journey to Work: UCLA Symposium on Welfare Reform and Transportation, Los Angeles, CA, April 6-7, 2000.
[21] Sandra Danziger et al. *Barriers to the Employment of Welfare Recipients*. Poverty Research and Training Center, School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, February, 2000. [INTERNET, WWW] http://www.ssw.umich.edu/poverty/wesappam.pdf [Accessed May, 2000].
[22] Cervero et al., op. cit.
[23] Katherine O'Regan and John M. Quigley. *Spatial Isolation, Transportation and Welfare Recipients: What Do We Know?* Paper presented at the UCLA Conference on Transportation and Welfare Reform, Los Angeles, CA, March, 1998.
[24] Bania et al, op. cit.
[25] Harriet Presser and Amy Cox. "The Work Schedules of Low-Educated American Women and Welfare Reform." *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 120, No. 4, p. 25-34, April 1997.
[26] O'Regan and Quigley, op. cit.
[27] Paul Ong and Evelyn Blumenberg. "Job Access, Commute and Travel Burden Among Welfare Recipients." *Urban Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, p. 77-93, 1998.
[28] William D. Passero. "Spending Patterns of Families Receiving Public Assistance." *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 119, No. 4, p. 21-28, 1996.
[29] John Kasarda. "The Implications of Contemporary Redistribution Trends for National Urban Policy." Social *Science Quarterly*, Vol. 61, p. 373-400, 1980.
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William Julius Wilson. *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
[30] Joleen Kirschenman and Kathryn M. Neckerman. "We'd Love to Hire Them, But…: The Meaning of Race for Employers." In Cristopher Jencks and Paul E. Peterson, Eds. *The Urban Underclass*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, p. 203-232, 1991.
[31] Neil Bania, Claudia Coulton and Laura Leete. *Welfare Reform and Access to Job Opportunities in the Cleveland Metropolitan Area*. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., November 6, 1999.
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[32] Evelyn Blumenberg, Paul Ong and Andrew Mondschein. Uneven Access to Opportunities: Welfare Recipients, Jobs and Employment Support Services in Los Angeles. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., November 6, 1999.
[33] Evelyn Blumenberg and Paul Ong. "Job Accessibility and Welfare Usage: Evidence from Los Angeles." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1998.
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[35] Brian Taylor and Paul Ong. "Spatial Mismatch or Automobile Mismatch? An Examination of Race, Residence and Commuting in the U.S. Metropolitan Areas." *Urban Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 9, p. 1453-1474, November 1995.
[36] Sandra Danziger et al. *Barriers to the Employment of Welfare Recipients*. Poverty Research and Training Center, School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, February, 2000. [INTERNET, WWW] http://www.ssw.umich.edu/poverty/wesappam.pdf [Accessed May, 2000].
[37] See Paul Ong. "Work and Car Ownership Among Welfare Recipients." *Social Work Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 255-262, December 1996. (Aid to Families with Dependent Children, AFDC, was the replaced by CalWORKs after welfare reform).

[38] Robert Cervero, Onesimo Sandoval and John Landis. *The Value of Transportation in Stimulating Welfare-to-Work Transitions: Evidence from San Francisco*. Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board, July 1999.
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[40] Cervero et al., op cit.
[41] O'Regan and Quigley, op cit.
[42] Harriet Presser and Amy Cox. "The Work Schedules of Low-Educated American Women and Welfare Reform." *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 120, No. 4, p. 25-34, April 1997.
[43] These numbers reflect rectangular distance, not actual travel distance. Note that the national average one-way work commute reported in the 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey is 12 miles and 20 minutes by automobile, and 13 miles and 42 minutes by public transit. See Patricia Hu and Jennifer Young, *Summary of Travel Trends, 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey*, working paper, Oak Ridge National Lab, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, January 8, 1999.
[44] O'Regan and Quigley, op cit.
[45] Evelyn Blumenberg and Paul Ong. "The Transportation-Welfare Nexus: Getting Welfare Recipients to Work." In Daniel Mitchell and Patricia Nomura, Eds. *California Policy Options, 1999*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research and UCLA Anderson Forecast, 1999.
[46] William D. Passero. "Spending Patterns of Families Receiving Public Assistance." *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 119, No. 4, p. 21-28, 1996.
[47] The Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS) is the most comprehensive national inventory of travel behavior available. The survey is conducted at irregular intervals by the U.S. Department of Transportation and was conducted most recently in 1995. The NPTS seeks to be the authoritative source of data on daily trips. It is broken into several sections that provide household demographics, vehicle usage, trip timing, trip duration, and numerous other travel related statistics. The central feature of the NPTS is the travel day trip diary, in which respondents were required to list the time, mode and destination of all trips taken during a randomly selected travel day. Here, we compare the travel behavior of two NTPS sub-populations with the travel behavior of CTNA respondents. The first comparison group selected only working age adults (18-60), but imposed no other geographic or demographic constraints. This group represents 95,360 people in 42,033 households. The second group selected only working age, low-income, single parents from large cities (metropolitan statistical areas greater than 1,000,000) from the NPTS based on the income categories used by Murakami and Young (Elaine Murakami and Jennifer Young, *Daily Travel by Persons with Low Income*, Paper for NPTS Symposium, Bethesda, MD, October 29-31, 1997). We selected this group because the vast majority of welfare participants are single mothers. As Section 2 demonstrates, the characteristics of this group were quite similar to the welfare participants included in our survey; however, since this only resulted in 366 people, caution should be used when interpreting the results of comparisons between CTNA respondents and this group. Note that the proportion of female respondents in the CTNA (93 percent) is larger than that in the GAIN population as a whole (82 percent in November of 1999); Appendix 1describes how survey tabulations for this report were weighted to take this into consideration and to make results more representative of the population. For more information on the NPTS see http://www-cta.ornl.gov/npts/1995/Doc/index.shtml .
[48] A trip is defined as any time a person travels from one location to another, even if it is a short, walking trip. By trip we refer to a 'one-way' trip; for example, a work commute (traveling from home to work and then from work back home) involves two trips.
[49] John Pucher, Tim Evans and Jeff Wenger. "Socioeconomics of Urban Travel: Evidence from the 1995 NPTS." *Transportation Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 3, p. 15-33, Summer 1998.
Elaine Murakami and Jennifer Young. *Daily Travel by Persons with Low Income*. Paper for the NPTS Symposium, Betheda, MD, October 29-31, 1997.
Sandra Rosenbloom. *Reverse Commute Transportation: Emerging Provider Roles*. Final Report prepared for the University Research and Training Program, Washington, D.C., 1992.
[50] John Pucher, Tim Evans and Jeff Wenger. "Socioeconomics of Urban Travel: Evidence fromthe 1995 NPTS." *Transportation Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 3, p. 15-33, Summer 1998.
[51] For this study, the morning peak hours are considered to be between 6 AM and 9 AM.

[52] The percentage of females in the CTNA is higher than in the GAIN population in general. In November of 1999, the percentage of females in GAIN was 82%. See Appendix 1.
[53] Maya Felderman et al. "What Does it Mean to be Poor in America?" *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 119, No. 5, p. 3-17, May 1996.
[54] Coalition for Workforce Preparation. *Transportation Needs of CalWORKs Participants*. Paper presented at the CalWORKs Partnership Conference, Anaheim, CA, December 15-17, 1999.
[55] Rex S. Green et al. *Alameda County CalWORKs Needs Assessment: Barriers to Working and Summaries of Baseline Status.* Public Health Institute, Berkeley, CA. 2000.
[56] Danziger et al., op cit.
[57] Murakami and Young, op cit.
[58] Alan Pisarski. *Commuting in America II: The Second National Report on Commuting Patterns and Trends.* Prepared under the direction of the Committee for the National Commuting Study. Lansdowne, VA: The Eno Trans Foundation, 1996.
[59] This percentage should be interpreted cautiously since many participants may be exempt from welfare to work requirements. Also, in some two-parent households, the parent who did not respond to the survey may be undertaking job-search. In this case, the respondent may not be required to participate in job search.
[60] The distances are based on the rectangular distance between place of residence and the nearest GAIN office and Job Club. This estimate is a relative measure that is useful since much of the Los Angeles road system is on a grid system
[61] Locations of GAIN/CalWORKs offices are mapped in Appendix 4.
[62] This estimate is based on a combination of survey questions that offer a very approximated measure of the time spent between initially leaving home one particular morning, and the time the participant is usually scheduled to begin work. This measure should therefore be taken with caution. It may include trip chains that the participant engaged in before reaching work (such as dropping off children at childcare), and arrangements to meet bus schedules (time may be spent waiting for transit, in transfers, or participants may arrive at their workplace earlier than needed because of transit schedules).
[63] *AFDC Job Readiness Survey, Study Months of May, June or July 1996*. California: California Department of Social Services, 1996.
[64] This information was provided by Mary Williams, LACOE Coordinator for GAIN Job Services, with authorization from DPSS. Mary Williams, email message to Jose Salgado, forwarded to one of the authors, May 23, 2000.
[65] These employment ratios, however, may be slightly misleading since a disproportionately high percent of those with limited access to a car are in two-parent households. Since one parent in two parent households may not be required to participate in welfare-to-work activities, this group may contain a disproportionate number of parents not in the labor force.
[66] Steven Raphael and Lorien Rice. *The Effect of Car Ownership on the Employment Rates of Welfare Recipients and Low Skilled Women: Evidence from Quasi-Experiments*. Paper presented at The Journey to Work: UCLA Symposium on Welfare Reform and Transportation, Los Angeles, CA, April 6-7, 2000.
Ong, Paul. *Car Access and Welfare-to-Work*. Unpublished working paper, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, Los Angeles, CA, May 4 2000.
[67] The time between leaving home and starting work may include some trips besides the actual commute to work, such as dropping children off at childcare, or time spent in order to meet bus schedules and transfers. Additionally, the times presented on Table 5 are a gross estimate, and are not based on actual objective measures of travel time to work.
[68] This group includes children who are 5 years old and do not go to school.
[69] Childcare may include unpaid care or babysitting by a relative of friend.
[70] DPSS now pays for family or friends who serve as childcare providers in addition to licensed child care.
[71] Due to the design of the survey and questionnaire, we have very limited information on the reasons why participants are not working or actively seeking work, that is, why they fall into our previously defined group of "not in the labor force". If the reason for this is that they have been exempted from GAIN, they do not receive payments for childcare, which those enrolled in GAIN do receive. If they do not receive these payments, and must spend out of pocket for childcare, it is quite likely that their use of childcare will also be lower.
[72] Analysis of travel distance to childcare is based on the locations at which participants received childcare based on CalWORKs payments for Stage 1 childcare services. The geographic locations that participants received childcare

were compared to their residential location to derive travel distance. Appendix 4 and Appendix 9 provide additional details on this analysis.

[73] The Licensing Information System File for December 1999 was obtained from LADPSS and provides details on the geographic location of all licensed providers in Los Angeles County regardless of whether they provided service to CalWORKs participants. This provides more comprehensive detail on all respondents, since only certain respondents were asked about their younger children. See Appendix 4 for additional details on this data.

[74] The Long-Term Family Self Sufficiency Plan approved by the Board of Supervisors on October 29, 1999, required that the transportation needs assessment be exp anded to include this medical component because of the importance that adequate access to health care has for CalWORKs families. Adults need to be in good health in order to work or participate in welfare to work activities. If parents and their children are healthy, they are less likely to have absentee-related problems or be unemployed. Additionally, children who have regular medical check-ups and immunizations have a greater probability of having an optimum development, staying in school and graduating from high school. If families obtain preventive health care services regularly, health problems can be treated at early stages and have fewer chances of turning into cases of extreme illness or emergencies. Families will access health care to a greater degree if transportation is available to and from medical sites; on the other hand, lack of transportation prevents families from utilizing available health care services.

[75] Medi-Cal is California's implementation of the federal Medicaid program. Persons who are not citizens or legal residents are only eligible for prenatal, emergency and some long-term care under Medi-Cal.

[76] Legislative Analyst Office, State of California. *Analysis of the 2000-01 Budget Bill: Health and Social Services*, 1999. [WWW] http://www.lao.ca.gov/analysis_2000/health_ss/hss_9_Medi-Cal_anl00.htm [Accessed March 28, 2000].

[77] Unfortunately, there is no information on whether a participant owns the car in the household. It is likely that those with unlimited access are also car owners. A person with limited access, however, not only shares a household car, but the vehicle may belong to a member of the household who is not a part of the welfare case.

[78] In both the survey and focus groups, participants were presented with a choice of four automobile-oriented programs and four public transit programs. They were asked to rank those programs from most to least helpful. The survey and focus group approaches allow for slightly different, yet complementary types of information on participant preferences. The controlled nature of the survey allows for the assembly and discussion of descriptive statistics of preferences, whereas the focus groups allow more extensive commentary on participants' perspectives and opinions. The results from both methods should be interpreted with some caution since each presented participants with a prescribed list of options. While this approach resulted in clear feedback on the specific programs listed, this list may have precluded participant comments and input on other potential program options that were not listed.

[79] Row Percentages Add to 100 percent, except when due to rounding.

[80] These are not absolute categories since they are based only on travel for one day. It is possible that those who are only passengers for the reference day may use public transit the next day. Despite this limitation, the following analysis provides useful profiles.

[81] Evelyn Blumenberg, Steven Moga and Paul Ong. *Getting Welfare Recipients to Work: Transportation and Welfare Reform. Summary of Conference Proceedings.* Los Angeles, CA: UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research, 1998, p. 19.

[82] Figure 3 shades the difference between the number of auto trips for work per TAZ estimated by SCAG and the estimated number of participant household cars. The shading represents the excess number of car trips that must be supplied by friends or relatives that are probably not a part of the welfare case. Unfortunately, we do not know the average number of work-related car trips supplied by a household where an adult participant owns a car. The analysis uses a plausible range from 1.5 to 2.0. Although the estimates of excess demand vary directly with the assumption of the household supply, the relative distribution by TAZ is very similar. See Appendix 9 for additional details.

[83] In addition to being asked to rank the automobile oriented programs described earlier, survey respondents were asked to rank four public transit programs form most to least helpful to them. The public transit options presented were: (1) a transit pass that allows you to ride for free any time on any public transit system in LA County; (2) More frequent bus service (for example, buses that run every 10 minutes); (3) a lift home from work if you need to get home in case of any emergency; and (4) a shuttle or van that picks you up at home, drops you at work, and then takes you home at the end of the day.

[84] The CTNA focus groups and survey were primarily designed do document transportation needs and deficiencies of participants and, in that way, did not explicitly target positive perceptions and comments on the transit system.

[85] This number is based on respondents' personal perception of the time they spent waiting for the bus during their last trip; it is not an objective measure of the actual bus schedules and timing.
[86] The GAIN Employment Activity and Reporting System, or GEARS, is the administrative database used to track recipients who participate in GAIN.
[87] A transportation analysis zone (TAZ) is a small geographic unit similar to a census tract, which is used for transportation planning and analysis purposes. In this particular case, it closely mirrors whole census tracts in Los Angeles County.
[88] Information based on the American Business Information (ABI) database for Los Angeles County for 1998. The gender composition of occupations was based on the 1998 Current Population Survey and the educational level was based on data from the California Cooperative Occupational Information System (CCIOS) conducted by California's Labor Market Information Division (EDD). These two sources of information were used to identify occupations that were predominantly female and where a majority of the firms require no more than a high school education. That information, then, was used with Employment Development Department's occupation-industry matrix (unpublished summary data) to estimate the number of low-education jobs held primarily by women in each industry in the ABI database for Los Angeles County.
[89] Note that it is rectangular distance, not actual travel distance.
[90] Unfortunately, there is no detailed longitudinal study on the dynamics in the change in car-ownership status. One study using data for AFDC recipients finds that over a period of approximately two years, a quarter of owners lost their cars and a fifth of non-owners became owners (Doug Miller and Paul Ong. *Technical Report: Analysis of Transportation Access and Employment Using Q5 and Related Surveys*, unpublished paper, UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, Los Angeles, CA, November 1999).
[91] CalWORKs chose to adopt the same vehicle asset limits used by the Food Stamp program. The CalWORKs, Food Stamps and Medi-Cal asset limit for vehicles —established in 1977 and raised only 3% since—is $4650 and refers to the wholesale market value of the vehicle.
[92] The data come from cars advertised in the Sunday edition of the Los Angeles Times, May 28, 2000. A total of 50 used cars were identified.
[93] Analysis of CTNA survey data and national transportation data strongly indicate that welfare recipients and the working poor are limited to the low end of the used car market. Nationwide, the average age of vehicles owned is correlated with income level. Lower income households on average own much older vehicles. The average age of vehicles owned by families earning $15,000 or less is over ten years. Results from the CTNA found that among recipients with vehicles in their household, over 69% owned vehicles that were 10 years old or greater. Furthermore, Q5 survey data conducted by the California Department of Social Services with California welfare recipients show that the average age of vehicles registered to welfare recipients is 14 years.
[94] For example, The Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights indicates that 1997 data for State Farm Mutual Insurance Company show that the company lacks agents in most of the zip codes in central and south-central Los Angeles, areas that have high concentrations of welfare recipients (J. M. Glionna, "State Farm Suit Seeks Return of Data, Critics Say Indicating Redlining," *Los Angeles Times*, Sunday, December 5, 1999). Only two of the 25 company's claims offices are located in low-income neighborhoods.
[95] Lyn Hunstad. *Characteristics of Uninsured Motorists*, California Department of Insurance, Sacramento, February 1999. [INTERNET, WWW] www.insurance.ca.gov/PRP/Policy_Research/Auto/char_um.pdf [Accessed 06/01/00].
[96] Possible penalties include large fines and vehicle impoundment. Additionally, Proposition 213 limits the amount an uninsured driver can collect if he or she is the victim of an accident.
[97] There may be some forthcoming relief for the high automobile insurance premiums. Last year, as part of the legislation that requires minimum coverage, Governor Davis approved a "Lifeline Insurance Program." This pilot program requires that all insurance companies offer flat rate insurance to residents of Los Angeles and San Francisco counties who are qualified drivers that earn less than 150 percent of the official poverty line, at a $450 flat fee rather than an area based rate. However, the rules proposed for this program are likely to discourage many drivers because they require participants to make an initial payment of $100. Another rule prevents a driver from participating in the program if any other person in the household already possesses insurance. Nonetheless, this program, if fully implemented without major barriers, can promote car ownership and insurance rates for a significant number of individuals. Taking advantage of the Lifeline Insurance Program can dramatically decrease the cost of car ownership for a recipient; a Lifeline premium would decrease monthly costs by 16% to 20%.

[98] Margaret Pugh. *Barriers to Work: The Spatial Divide Between Jobs and Welfare Recipients in Metropolitan Area*. Discussion Paper. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Center for Urban and Metropolitan Policy, 1998. [Internet, WWW] http://www.brook.edu/es/urban/mismatch.pdf [Accessed 05/05/2000], p. 34.
[99] Southern California Association of Governments. *1998 State of the Commute Report*. Los Angeles, CA: Southern California Association of Governments, 1998.
[100] Eric Mann. "Confronting Transit Racism in Los Angeles" In Robert D. Bullard and Glenn S. Johnson (Eds.) *Just Transportation: Dismantling Race and Class Barriers to Mobility*. Stony Creek, CT: New Society Publishers, 1997, p. 68.
[101] Internal analysis conducted by MTA staff and reported in written communication by Ashok Kumar of the Transit Planning Section.
[102] Access Services Incorporated (ASI) is L.A. County's Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA). This agency is a state-mandated department, which is charged with the development, implementation and regional coordination of services pertaining to social service transportation within the County. ASI offers specialized transportation for persons with disabilities and contracts with private taxi and van service companies to provide requested services. ASI determines eligibility, and serves to dispatch needed services based upon individual demand. These services are funded out of County Proposition C funds, and Section 5310 capital grant funds.
[103] This program is the Countywide Welfare to Work Unanticipated Transportation Needs Service (U-TRANS), developed by MTA's Transit Planning.
[104] Community based organizations (CBOs) were contacted from a list provided by Los Angeles County's DPSS. Appendix 10 contains the questionnaire used to interview the CBOs.
[105] Potential jobs are identified as low-education jobs held primarily by women, as discussed in Appendix 4 and Appendix 9.
[106] This number is based on rectangular distance, not actual travel distance.
[107] Participants who are not working and not seeking work may or may not be engaged in other welfare-to-work activities.
[108] This number is based on rectangular distance, not actual travel distance.
[109] See Patricia Hu and Jennifer Young, *Summary of Travel Trends, 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey*, working paper, Oak Ridge National Lab, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, January 8, 1999.
[110] These predicted distances are longer than the average home to work travel distances found among those GAIN participants who are currently employed (7 miles). Because these estimates are projected rather than actual, and because this includes the entire GAIN population (and not just those employed), the model anticipates a slightly longer home to work trip that what has been measured to date. The same holds true for predicted transit travel times derived from calculating TranStar trip itineraries. The average predicted time from TranStar was 41 minutes once the bus had arrived, which when combined with the 22 minute average wait for the bus, falls short of the 103 minute average estimated from the survey data. The difference could be accounted for by the walk times on either end of the transit trip, but also due to the differences in methodologies used to estimate such times. Such differences, while inherent in different methods of estimation, should not take away from the larger points: the average home to work travel distance will be in the 7-10 mile range for most participants, with those taking transit spending considerably longer in their journey to work. Additionally, existing transportation subsidies do not cover the full cost of transportation.